

ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE.

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A SHAMROCK LEAF.

"WHAT *shall* we do?" said the Hapgood sisters—that is, Phyllis and myself, Phoebe. Picture the dismay of two prim maidens of quite mature years.

A foreign element was to be introduced into our household; for lo! these many years we were our own "helps," dusky Nancy coming in to do the heavier work. Now, by the doctor's orders, she has left Hickston; and our quiet way of living, independent of Irish service, must be broken up, and we must decide in haste, even if repenting at leisure is sure to follow. Our cousin, little Olive, the drawing teacher, comes to spend her vacation, and in the mail which brought her letter, the motherless nephew, dear to our hearts, spake after this fashion:

"SWEET P's:—Dear and honored aunts, your 'neffy' will come down like a wolf on the fold at 2.20 P. M., the twelfth, ravenous for one of old Nancy's apple pies and whipped cream, also unlimited berries and milk.

"Have business in glorious old Hickston, but can tarry there if you like, for my vacation with my first loves and my best loves Phyllis and Phoebe,

"Your own

"THEODORIC THE GOTH."

"July 10th. (Æt. twenty-one to-day!)"

Sister declared herself equal to making a pie which would vanish as rapidly as

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Nancy's, and our boy could have the little red room, and perhaps it might be all the pleasanter for him if Olive were there, but a nervous horror was upon us thinking of another arrival expected from the city, from the intelligence office. Our order had been "German or Swedish preferred," and the obliging lady manager wrote she would be sure to find and send us the treasure we desired.

It was eight o'clock Monday morning; we looked ruefully at the accumulated "wash," even capable sister Phyllis unable to laundry the pile of white muslins—a lazy-aired day, fit only for wandering in shady woods or by the river, it seemed to me—when we saw coming up the garden-path a broad-shouldered young damsel, Irish from her feet to the black locks cut in a "bang" close above black brows, small blue eyes, and wide-nostriled, aspiring nose, high cheek-bones, and cheeks rose-red, a long upper-lip, and wide smile, disclosing fine white teeth, as she came up the steps, extending a shapely hand.

"And be's ye the ould leddies I was to kum to, the Miss Happygoods? for I'm Honor Mo'raun as wor to kum," she said, as she plunged along with a gait as though used only to the tussocks of her native bogs.

"An' how purty your posies be, and could I hev a drink o' wather? lade me to the well an' it's I 'ull draw it," was her next remark, as she laid down her bundle

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in the dining-room, whither "the leddies" had meekly followed.

Not a doubt seemed to enter her mind as to being accepted at once, as, all smiles, she took off her hat before the mantle-glass and smoothed the black "bang."

"An' what wud ye like me to do nixt?" she said.

"Honor Mo'raun, you are not yet engaged," said sister Phyllis, rather severely; "now let me see your letter of recommendation, if you have one."

"An' is it me karacter letther from me last place ye means? Oh! yes!" and here a slight cloud passed over her face (which was truly, as Phyl and I afterward agreed, one of the honestest of faces). "But I'm feared ye'll be afther laffin at some av thim big words at the ind av it. I don't understhand, but when I showed it to the praste afther me last confession, he just smiled and said he thought I wasn't very bad, and I'd grow carefuller, and the leddy at the intelligince office said as you could rade it and decide if I'd do—but sure an' I know I *kin* do—why I can wash splendid, and mek up me shirts would make ye smile wid the pleasure av seein' 'em shine!"

And then she handed us the note of recommendation, signed by "Mrs. Sylvanus O. Brown, of 20 Hopkins Place," which ran:

"The bearer of this, Honor Moran, has lived with us eight months; we have found her tidy, always obliging and willing, an industrious worker, good plain cook, and excellent laundress and perfectly honest.

"As a disintegrater of ceramics, and disrupter of textile fabrics, she has no equal!"

Phyl and I read it, with looks at each other of astonishment and "varied emotions."

"Wait a little, Honor Moran," said sister, while we went into the parlor, and laughed and sighed in company.

"Disintegrater!" Oh! ma's pretty blue china!" said Phyllis.

"Disrupter of textile fabrics!" think of our muslins!" I echoed her sigh.

"But she's honest."

"And she looks strong and clean."

"But she walks like a young elephant."

"And she has a voice like a factory-gong."

"And she smashes, and she rends."

"But there's nobody else to be had, Phœbe, and the young folks will be here to-morrow."

"Oh! well," was the concluding tremulous decision, "we might try her; there's no help for it. We'll get out the stoneware, except such pieces as I'll wash myself, and wear woolens, I suppose."

So we returned, to find Honor pacing the garden paths, delighted, apparently, with the bloom and sweetness about her which she smelled, stooping awkwardly, but had not pulled even a bit of mignonette.

"It does me heart good to see thim flowers," she said, "an' I hope ye hev a vegetable garden. Oh! but I love a onion right out o' the earth, an' fresh cabbage is jist beautiful."

"And why, Honor, did you leave Mrs. Sylvanus O. Brown," Phyllis asked, hesitating whether in our trim garden and little home full of old treasures we could have this trampling young heifer.

"It's thrue for ye; I don't rightly know, Miss Happygood, if it was bekase I had a follerer—and Heaven knows I didn't want him a-follerin' any more'n she did—or bekase the day av her dinner-party I dragged apart the dinin'-room table as I wor goin' to set it, wid the best chiny on the middle av it, and broke the big platters and some av the dinner coffee-cups, an' tipped over the vases an' the wather and bookys flew all splashin' about, an' she jist said, 'Honor, ye may lave this day week.' An' I declare, though I liked Mrs. Brown first rate, an' I cried bucketsful over the broken chiny,

I wor right glad to get away from the flat—livin' in flats isn't half livin' any way—an' I had a mind for the kentry. An', thin, I'll git away from the widdy-man, who, bekase he wor me first cousin's husband's brother, thinks he kin be afther havin' me—but he can't, thin. An' Miss Happygood, I hope ye'll like me, most everybody does, I'm that good-natured; an' I like the looks o' ye, an' the place is jist beautiful."

All this was rolled off rapidly, her strong hands twisting her white apron hem, and the white teeth glistening.

Altogether there was a sort of fascination to us elderly creatures in this fresh, green sprig of Erin, "rale shamrock of Paddyland," laughed Phyl, after showing Honor to the kitchen and her room.

By noon the washing was hung on the lines, and our simple dinner cooked, with Honor neatly arrayed as waitress, who tried her best to walk and talk gently.

Sister and I tremblingly congratulated ourselves that there seemed no undue amount of rents, and no breakages on the first day.

Then on the second day appeared little Olive, hat-box, color-box, easel, umbrella, camp-stool, descending from the 'bus.

Honor rushed from the ironing-table to assist—it was indeed a rush, as she caught one of her feet in the claw-foot of the hall-stand and fell with a sprawl, bringing down one of the dear old blue bowls grandpa brought from London, its water and nasturtium shower with it.

"An' it's sorry, sorry I am," she shouted, dashing down to the gate with a—

"Welkin, young ledly! the aunts has been waitin' an' watchin' for ye, an' this fine young man, if he belongs to ye, is a part o' ye luggage I can't help ye carry, but hand me all the rist av 'em."

It was Theodore himself, so goodly a sight to our eyes we could almost forget the broken "blue," but our guests were not acquainted as yet, and the blushing

little Olive beheld with astonishment the young man stopping at her place of destination.

We thought our young people a fine contrast as they sat at our table, he so tall and fair, and Olive, slight, brown, and shy, and as sparkling as a field of fire-flies as we come to know her better.

The week passed, during which we persuaded Olive to paint for our nephew's "birthday," although it was a little late, a spray of blackberry vine which I gathered, on a china bread-and-milk bowl; lovely it was to watch it growing so rapidly under her fingers, and we had it fired and ready to be presented when on a *lucky* day Honor tilted the trayful of glasses, which fell at his feet.

"And ye may thank the holy mother," she said, fervently, "that it wasn't the beautiful bowl as Miss Olive has all unbeknownst been a-paintin' for ye!"

"O Honor Moran! 'disintegrater of ceramics!'" quoted Phyllis.

"And did them long words in me letther mane I wor a smasher?" said Honor, sitting in the middle of the ruins weeping. "An' I'll niver be afther showin' that letther again, but sure I belave I haven't the sinse a girl of me age ought to have." However, she recovered her spirits sufficiently to advise our guests that they "might be likin' the mush-mellin betther nor the pie, for she thought she forgot to sugar the pie intirely."

And when Theodore, between a bread-crumble and laughter at Honor's queer ways, choked slightly, and begged to be excused, she was ready with a—

"Yes, an' ye may go thin!"

Yet, in spite of our war over the broken dishes, and much mending of delicate old fabrics as they came from the wash, blent with many words of caution to the ever good-natured Honor, the "vacation days" passed away with more of youth and cheer in our old house than for many a long year. Theodore was *quite* pleased to stay with us, making a point to gather for us

each morning an offering of "sweet peas," in honor of his aunts.

And Olive and her old cousin wandered to pretty points of view; sometimes she coaxed me to try sketching, too, and it was dear pleasure to watch the lovely scenes familiar to me rapidly reproduced by her brush, in exquisite color. Theodore, our steady helper, carried the "traps," and often his own fishing-rod to the stream-side, and even busy Phyllis came with a novel or her knitting, and we were all young together, with honest Honor seen, as lunch-time approached, tearing over the field with "bottle, and bag, or basket," happy herself as the rest of us.

But one day she approached with quieter tread, crying out before she reached the group under the greenwood tree:

"He's here! me ould widdy-man! he's got work at the factory, an' he's found me, an' now he'll be ha'antin' me all the time."

Ah! well, that was the beginning of the end of the service of our first Irish girl, it was true that he "haunted" her persistently.

"Talkin' so swate o' me ould mother," says Honor, "an' he knows that I want to be savin' me money to tak' me home to visit her, and how kin I, if I marry him thin?"

"Alana! is he fated to me?" she cried one day, as she came in to tell us "he wouldn't take a 'no'. An' she loved him—a little—an' she *didn't* love him, and whativer should she *do*?"

The vacation days were over. Our tall Theodore departed, and Olive. Each promised to spend the Christmas time with us.

Meanwhile, to our kitchen the rather handsome, red-haired young Irishman came frequently, and we guessed, our advice to the contrary, our Honor would some day become Mrs. O'Keefe the second, though she once, with a deep sigh, said:

"Those rude men does be a'fle wicked,

they say, but since Hallowe'en I see he is fated to me; it is to be. 'Ehonaa' is Irish for 'All Hallowe'en,'" she volunteered the information, "and 'wedding'—me mind seems to rin on weddings—is 'bonnesh.' An' I'll tell ye anither wedding ahead—I tried the thricks for them and the thricks sayd for sure it was to be Mr. Theodor' and Miss Olive!"

And when, at its once-a-year time, came Christmas, came Theodore and Olive, and we again, a family of five, rose very early in the morning, Honor still earlier, awaiting the coming of the laggard bridegroom, for she had pledged herself to go with him that day and "lave the dear old led-dies" to share Patrick's poverty, though they thought themselves with less than "forty pounds a year passing rich," to commence wedded life and housekeeping.

At seven o'clock, exactly, after morning mass, Father Flynn had bidden them to be present for the ceremony, and Honor was greatly pleased that we would all rise and go with her, her only witnesses beside a good old friend, Margaret.

A very subdued wild Irish girl she looked in the early morning light, though her best blue dress was brightened with pink bows for this occasion, and her bangs frizzed most unbecomingly. She wore gloves which Theodore gave her, and Olive made for her a pretty bonnet in place of the flaring hat, and Phyllis and I each "kissed her for her mother" before we set forth by the longest way for the Catholic church.

Entering, we found Patrick on his knees in his pew; he looked up with no prayerful or pleasant expression in his eyes.

"We are just ten minutes late," he said, "and we met Father Flynn, and he says he'll not marry us at all this day; we're to wait till the morn, to marry."

Chorus of "Too bad!" "It's a shame!" from our group.

"And Honor has gone to see him in his own house," says the bridegroom-expect-

ant; "but it'll do no good. I know him."

"Oh!" said impulsive Olive, "I will go and ask, too; won't you, Cousin Phyl?"

Not much did Phyllis like to interview Father Flynn, but it seemed too bad, indeed, that the Christmas Day should not be complete in its promise. So, as she told us afterward, they found him sitting behind his newspaper, which he did not deign to lower, and this conversation ensued:

"Good morning, Father Flynn. For our Honor's sake I have ventured to intrude, to ask if you will not reconsider your determination to not marry the young people this morning."

"They were to have been there at seven, sharp; they're late; I can't do it."

Then sister Phyllis, remembering he could be suave to some of his congregation, said, severely:

"Is it because she is a servant and poor that you refuse?"

"An' I wouldn't do it for fifty dollars," he asserts, still behind his newspaper.

"They must come again to-morrow."

"Well, to-morrow I hope you will give them some good advice."

"Shall not do it, it's no use; as well talk to a stone fence."

"Are all Irish so obstinate?" says Phyllis, thinking ruefully of her small success with the specimen of Ireland before her.

"Not all; she's a very stupid woman."

"Yes, perhaps so about some things," assents Phyllis, "but she has proved herself a faithful servant, and has a kind heart."

"Which you have not," muttered Olive.

Outside, Honor bedews her bright ribbons with many tears, and Patrick says "he feels like he might fall a-cursin'," though he begs Honor "not to give in to a howlin'."

So, as they are sure it would be ill-luck to return home after starting, Theodore kindly volunteers the use of his railroad tickets, and they go on with old Margaret to spend the day in the city.

"And to-morrow, when you make yourself ready, don't curl your hair, Honor, it's prettier worn as you always wear it," advises Olive.

The next morning we, who are our own housemaids, are too busy to get ready for a second so early walk, but our young folks are present at the church, and carry our invitation for the newly-wedded pair to come to breakfast in the kitchen, so lately Honor's domain.

"An' I'll be plazed to stay wid ye thro' the holidays," Honor says afterward, shyly, "if me husban' doesn't object."

"Anything to plase this good family," is his reply.

And she tarried the week through; the eventful week which began with a wedding-breakfast in the kitchen off the stout stone-china, our parting gift to the happy couple, and ended with an engagement tea in the parlor.

Yes, our Theodore and our Olive are some day to be married, and we had our merry little "Seventh day o' Christmas" supper on the round table before the parlor fire, Phyllis giving us toast-from-the-loaf and tea from our egg-shell china cups which we washed ourselves, wondering "who next?"

KARIN CARA.

A RULER OF DESTINY.*

CHAPTER V.

WHEN I came back to consciousness again, I found myself lying on a wide divan in the parlor at Sunny Slope under the hovering care of Cousin Margaret, whose beautiful, compassionate face, bending over mine, moved me to throw my arms about her neck and cry:

"Oh! nothing is the matter, dear heart! I simply fainted. I shall be myself, presently."

But I found my impulse checked by a closely bandaged arm and a general bruised sense that would not suffer the desired demonstration.

On the other side I discovered Esther Day kneeling beside me, with a look of pain and contrition in her face which in itself would have restrained any expression of suffering on my part.

"It is all my fault," she said, penitently; "I fairly thrust this cruel accident upon you."

"No," I interrupted, "I ran after it—I wanted it—I could not do without it."

"It is I that am responsible for the calamity so generously shouldered by Miss Day," said a gentleman, appearing from the background. "That impish familiar of mine, the strolling umbrella, was the direct cause of all this trouble, for which I am suffering the deepest self-reproach."

"Can't you explain that there is nothing the matter, Cousin Margaret?" I begged, helplessly.

"Indeed, my friends," said Margaret,

turning about and addressing her remark, as it seemed to me, more particularly to Mr. Archibald, "since Miss Tyrrell does not appear to be dangerously injured, we must respect her evident desire to ignore the fact that she is injured at all, and regard the accident as a means of bringing us together in a sort of sympathetic bond, promotion of fair acquaintance, and good fellowship."

That was all very well, but I was conscious of wishing that the little speech had not been accented by such a favoring glance at Mr. Archibald, who responded with one equally interested.

"I am unspeakably grateful for the kindness with which you view my unfortunate part in the catastrophe so painful to Miss Tyrrell," he said, with a sympathizing look toward me. "And may I not claim the privilege of coming in to-morrow to inquire after her welfare, and, I hope, to congratulate her on her rapid recovery?"

"We shall be happy to receive you at any time," returned Margaret, most cordially, I thought, since we were indebted to the artist only for the little escapade of his umbrella.

Nevertheless, I was quite touched by his very charming manner of leave-taking at last, and submitted with grace to see Margaret walk with him to the door and bow him out with her sweetly assuring smile.

Miss Day, too, soon took her departure, begging the right to come back in the ca-

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capacity of nurse for the night, but I resolutely declined her attendance in that office.

"You have had too much of me already," she said, with swift interpretation of my reasons.

"No; I just simply have to protect myself against a sinful belief in your superhuman qualities," I protested. "If I should discover the grace of a model nurse in addition to all of your other powers—"

Miss Day lifted a warning finger. "You overwhelm me with a mortifying sense of my self-conceit in talking to you as I did," she said, with flushing face. "I will flee to hide my shame, but I shall return, simply because I cannot rest without an effort to make some atonement for the injury sustained through me."

"Isn't she charming?" I said to Margaret, as the girl went out with a backward smiling glance and wave of her hand. "I have been so astonished that she did not once say 'his'n,' 'yourn,' 'you be,' and 'them are,' like the rest of the people whom we have met here, that I do not yet feel that she is indigenous to the soil. I believe I was half disappointed at first in missing the native flavor. But Lorinda will furnish that. What in the world is she bringing on the waiter?"

For at this moment Lorinda appeared in the door bearing a server laden with dishes, and a bouquet of peonies and sweet Williams, quite overpowering in its magnificence of color and proportion.

"As it's supper-time, I jest thought I'd fetch yourn in beforehand," said she, with a glow of pride and self-satisfaction. "Ma alwis thinks't I'm a capital hand t' fix up sick dishes."

"Oh! that's very thoughtful of you, Lorinda," I acknowledged with gratitude for such evident appreciation of my needs, "though you know I'm not sick at all, and you must not coddle me."

"Not sick, an' that great cut in yer arm!" ejaculated Lorinda, smiling at my

inconsistency, and in the temporary absence of Margaret venturing to take my case in hand. "Here, Leander!" she called to her household ally, whose beaming head immediately popped around the door-post. "Jest come up and tuck them pillows under Miss Turel's shoulders, so!" she added, as her obedient man left off stripping his red mustache long enough to fulfill rather awkwardly the orders of his superior.

"Now jest you take a sip o' this grewel, which is wonderful nourishin', ma thinks," soothingly urged my impromptu nurse, dipping from a yellow cooking-bowl a spoonful of olive liquid, which she pressed persuasively to my lips.

I sipped, with an involuntary grimace of repulsion.

"What's the matter?" gasped Lorinda, putting the spoon to her own mouth. "Gracious! too salt, haint it? 'Twas Leander 't put it in. I was a-makin' the toast, an' I told him—"

"You said jest to put in a pinch, Lorindy," defensively remarked the blushing culprit, holding up his huge thumb and forefinger to illustrate the capacity of "a pinch."

"Well, it's too much anyhow. Ye ought-a had more sense," rebuked Lorinda, setting the bowl aside with a titter, while Leander returned to the pastime of stroking and pulling his flaming mustache with the redoubtable thumb and forefinger.

"Now, then, jest try the toast," continued Lorinda, slashing into large mouthfuls the scorched and water-soaked slice, re-saturated with butter and cream, and thrusting a bit of it at me on the point of her knife.

"Thank you, Lorinda, you are very, very kind, but I really think it better for me to fast to-night," I said, deprecatingly.

"Pshaw! You'll be sick if you don't eat. Ma alwis says so," pursued the resolute Lorinda, still pressing her knife.

But at this moment Cousin Margaret

returned to the room and relieved me from Lorinda's tender persecutions, though, out of regard to her kind intentions, I begged her to leave the rampant peonies and upright sweet Williams, which she stuck recklessly in a tumbler, and placed upon the table beside me before she withdrew, followed by Leander, whose fingers were still caressing the flame on his upper lip.

"Poor Sydney!" smiled Margaret. "She will die of starvation in a land of plenty, if the cook whom I have ordered does not soon arrive."

"But not to displace Lorinda and Leander!" I implored. "We cannot get along without this domestic love idyl which gives charm to salt and saleratus. Leave me Lorinda and Leander, please, Cousin Margaret."

She bent to kiss me. "Have anything you wish only so you leave me the comfort of yourself," she said, gently.

There was a shadow of sadness in Margaret's eyes, a tremor of trouble in her voice, so strange and unusual with her that my heart thrilled with swift sympathy. Yet I dared not question her at all. Only by a full, assuring gaze of tenderness could I express my devoted love and desire to aid.

"I understand, dear heart," she whispered, in recognition of my unuttered interest and sympathy. "But just now I cannot talk about the matter that is troubling me. Your loving silence is a priceless boon until the time comes when I feel like speaking freely of what I now must indulge an instinct to conceal."

"Don't think that I have any gross curiosity about your affairs, dearest," I hastened to say. "Only let me love you with all my heart, and feel that I may be even of the simplest use to you, and I am satisfied."

On the following afternoon I was able to walk out upon the wide, south veranda, clad in a white cashmere tea-gown, and

carrying my wounded arm in a silken sling. Cousin Margaret had ordered out the softest couch and a mixed company of easy chairs, with a view to meet unquestioningly my capricious and changing moods, while her own little workstand and a table with books, papers, portfolios, and flowers were drawn up between us with suggestion of a pleasant summer afternoon's entertainment.

The still, sweet, dreamy peace of the day was strange, but delicious to me. From my half-reclining attitude I traced with delighted eye the drifting white-cloud pictures swung in the blue gallery of the sky, showing through the openings of the trees upon the wide, sloping lawn, while I listened entranced to the low, tender warbling, so unlike the wild, joyous caroling of the birds in the morning, my senses ravished meantime by the exquisite rose-scented air, with wafting odors of new-mown hay from the meadows below.

"It is rapturous, Margaret," I said, with a deep, tremulous breath of satisfaction. "Let us bide here forever."

She smiled, but she did not say with the croak of sad experience, "You will tire of it all soon enough." She was too wise to mar the peace of the present with dreary prognostications founded on the fickleness of human nature.

"Have you begun your psychological romance yet?" I softly questioned. "I was trying to keep out of your way, when I ran off, and like a disobedient child fell into danger. I am deeply interested in your contemplated work, Cousin Margaret."

"I have not had much thought for it yet, Sydney," she said. "I am not sure that one can write anything that does not bear the impress of one's own individuality and experience in a greater or less degree. Perhaps I shall be drawing too freely on the lessons if not the events of my own life if I attempt the work I had planned. I feel curiously like a spider

hung in her own web since I came to Sunny Slope."

There was a quick, sharp step, unlike the dragging, shuffling tread of our domestic familiars upon the walk, and, glancing around, I saw Mr. Archibald approaching with inquiry and solicitude visibly written in his handsome face. For he *was* handsome, as I was sorry to observe, and therefore extremely uninteresting to me. I had always doted on an ugly hero. In my estimation, there was a certain strength and grandeur of character associated with a plain man which was rarely if ever found in connection with personal beauty. And a pretty man *was* my abomination.

This was what I was vaguely thinking—or shall I say feeling?—as Archibald came up and stood exchanging greetings with Margaret, who had risen, with extended hand and a look of welcome, more warm and prolonged, it seemed to me, than the occasion really demanded.

"Miss Tyrrell is surprising us by her rapid and happy recovery," he said, coming over to me with the slightly embarrassed air of one who is sensitive to a repelling sphere.

I bowed, but did not proffer my free left hand which he saved himself from touching upon the arm of my chair. To be sure, he had extricated me from the grip of those savage knives, but that was no great cause of gratitude, since he had been the means of putting me there. If there was a bit of feminine logic in my dumb reasoning, I had no apology to offer for it.

"Oh! my injury was not a serious matter at all—just a simple test of the fine quality of steel in Miss Day's new mower," I remarked, with easy indifference.

"And a consequence of the unpardonable, even criminal stupidity and carelessness of a lazy artist in neglecting to prudently secure his umbrella against the coquetties of the wind," Mr. Archibald added, with an accent of profound self-

reproval. "The blade of my conscience is of keener and more cutting steel than that from which you suffered, Miss Tyrrell."

"You must spend a great deal of care on your conscience, Mr. Archibald," I said, contemptively. "Do you think it worth while to keep an instrument of torture so finely polished and so exquisitely edged? When a thing is done the flaying steel of a too highly wrought conscience will not undo the wrong. It is a pure waste of spiritual energy to suffer under such wounds."

"You convince me of the utter uselessness of my self-reproaches," returned the gentleman, who had at length seated himself in the chair beside me. "Allow me, therefore, to devote my heretofore wasted energies to your service, and be so kind as to consider me your humble bondsman whose term of slavery shall outlast your memory of injuries."

"Really, you embarrass me with a service for which I have no use," I answered, laughing. "Permit me to turn your commission over to the consideration of my friend, Mrs. Heath, who supplies my finest needs."

Cousin Margaret, who had been apparently so absorbed in the study of Mr. Archibald as to have missed the sense of our speech, as I supposed, here turned and looked at me, intuitively reading my mood.

"Mr. Archibald may find that sharp barbs of steel are not confined to consciences," she said, with a recognition of his simile in a meaning smile that flashed like an illumination to Mr. Archibald's eyes.

"As a counter-irritant I find such needle pricks rather delightful," he said.

"Can it be my tongue of which you are talking in such barbed arrows of speech?" I meekly questioned. "What surprises me is the importance attached to my stumbling part in this little drama of the umbrella, in which Miss Day carried her-

self so magnificently. The play would have been a tragic failure but for the firm hand with which she held the frightened Prince while I lay there in ignominious helplessness."

"And danger," added Mr. Archibald. "Yes, I felt the greatest admiration for Miss Day's resources, which were equal to all our emergencies. To come down to bottom principles, my admiration of Miss Day was the root of the trouble, which culminated in your accident. Her appearance on the field beside which I had stationed myself for the purpose of sketching a lovely lake and hill view, rather changed my plans, and I at once appropriated my hill and forest outlines as a background for her fine figure so splendidly poised on the carriage that came near being a modern and improved juggernaut in the case of Miss Tyrrell—"

"Though she was not a willing victim to the sacrifice," I interposed.

"The Gods forbid!" ejaculated the artist. "I busied myself with the sketch until my subject should swing around to that point in her orbit which would give me a fairer view of her face. Imagine my surprise and confusion when she again approached to find that my star was double! It was in my amazed contemplation of this wonderful phenomenon that I lost the warning given by my escaping umbrella, and failed to secure it before it sailed away on its mission of harm, which I could easily have hindered had I been less absorbed in admiration, as I said."

"It is not the first time that beauty has tempted its own destruction," Margaret observed, without appearing to mark what she was saying.

"But Esther Day's valor is the equal of her beauty," I said, with enthusiasm.

"Who is talking so boldly of Esther Day?" cried that young lady herself, suddenly appearing around the angle of the house and springing up the steps with an involuntary backward tilt of her pretty sun-hat whose wide brim formed

an effective background for her spirited, glowing face with its varying halo of auburn hair.

"Talk about angels and they presently arrive," said Mr. Archibald, rising to give her a seat beside me, while he fell back to a position in which he could gratify his wish to study without embarrassment to the subject.

"It is delightful to find you able to be out," the girl said, with a clinging pressure of my left hand, at the same time pitifully touching my arm in its silken sling.

"That is my special pride," I remarked, in response to her pained look. "I carry my arm in this support of Cousin Margaret's best neckerchief just for effect, don't you see? It is such a dainty blue—this web of silk—and harmonizes so comfortably with my cream gown. The awkward part of it is that I cannot turn the leaves of a book without marring the feint of helplessness which makes me so interesting. So you see I can only look longingly at the volumes on the table which no one has yet offered to read to me."

Miss Day caught without hesitation at this little lure, which I purposely threw out to relieve her of the embarrassment which I sensitively felt that she might suffer under the critical inspection of strangers whom she had not met in strictly social relations heretofore.

It was a late story from the most brilliant and popular novelist of the day that she chanced to pick up.

"Have you read it?" I asked. "Pray give me a taste of it."

She glanced with silent inquiry at the others, who hastened to second my request. Opening the book at random, she began to read in the middle of a chapter, and in the midst of a conversation which piqued our curiosity and quickened our interest to such a degree that we lost in our sympathy with the talkers a sense of the art with which their parts were naturally rendered. In a word, we forgot the reader, though I was all the time vaguely

sketching on my unseen canvas of the mind, the fine contour of Miss Day's face, and striving with invisible pigments to catch the effect of a fascinating dash of freckles showing through the clear, bright transparency of her skin.

Suddenly she came to a pause, and closed the book. "It is time to express our own opinions, isn't it?" she said, glancing around at her audience.

"Really, Miss Day, you make the characters of our author so tangible, that I feel like addressing my approvals and disapprovals personally to each," said Mr. Archibald, admiringly. "You appear to have visibly enlarged our company."

"Beg pardon, Miss Day," remarked Margaret, "but may I inquire why you began so abruptly in the middle of the story, instead of at the beginning?"

"It is a fashion I have," she answered, laughing. "I don't care much what the author says about his characters. I want to see how they act and what they say for themselves. If they interest me in their mid career, I turn back and make their fuller acquaintance just as I like to do with real people, whose genesis from beginning to end I do not know."

"And how is it in the present case? Do you not care to follow the fortunes of the hero and heroine introduced in this charmingly natural confab, in which you have interested us?" questioned Archibald, evidently with a view to testing the girl's critical powers.

"Are they not tiresomely commonplace creatures?" frankly responded Miss Day. "Our fine author has a theory of fiction which he perfectly illustrates in every work of his that I have read. These dull people are interesting simply as examples of the art and powers of minute observation in the literary showman behind them. All my admiration is for the skillful mover of the puppets who appears in the background challenging us to exclaim 'how natural! How perfectly true to life!' But the fact is, we ordinary

folk get enough of our own kind in every-day life, and when we have time to regale ourselves with a bit of fiction, we like it with a suggestion of something a little above and beyond ourselves. In a word, we—or I—prefer a hero or heroine a trifle heroic, with an influence somehow ennobling, or at least, above the dead-level of my every-day experience, don't you know?"

"Evidently Miss Day would not regard with favor the *genre* picture of which I was speaking awhile ago," Archibald said, smiling over to me.

"If that is faithfully executed, it will not be common-place," I returned.

Margaret meanwhile—by a magic I did not comprehend, considering the domestic material with which she had to deal—had quietly conjured upon the veranda beside her a prettily decorated table with tea and cakes, which Lorinda was passing with effusive hospitality, the more delightful because it did not occur to her that she was transcending her sphere of duty.

"Taint our regular supper, ye know," she said, apologetically, passing a cup to Mr. Archibald, "but jist a little bite to stay yer stomach awhile."

Mr. Archibald bowed with gracious acceptance of a proffered cake and a glance at Lorinda that assured her he perfectly understood the intention of the hostess so succinctly explained.

And Lorinda vanished to whisper audibly to Leander beyond the door that "that there artist feller is awfully perlite, an' seems to understand a thing or two."

"When you write up your artist experiences for the magazines next winter, Mr. Archibald, don't forget to put in a country girl's definition of an 'esthetic tea,'" said Esther Day, with a little irony. "We rural folk are an artistic property, you know."

"Don't say that with such sarcasm, Miss Day; you'll never find me disloyal to my country friends."

"I have an idea," declared Miss Day,

changing the subject swiftly. "My mind grasps at simplicities. I have been wishing to offer entertainment to you all, but was appalled at the thought of house formalities. Why may not I have a field tea?"

"Delightful!" we said, with ready assent.

"Well, I have legal holiday on Saturday afternoon," she went on. "Suppose I waive all proceedings of a social etiquette with which I am unfamiliar, and invite you at once to come to the Lake meadow where we shall gather our last load of hay on Saturday afternoon. Perhaps, though, Miss Tyrrell will not care to see Lake meadow again."

"I will leave my umbrella at my boarding-house," said Archibald, by way of persuasion.

"And I shall act as her chaperon hereafter, and guard her from rash ventures," smiled Cousin Margaret.

"I am longing to see again the scene of the great disaster," I added, assuringly.

"Then—as we keep early hours—I will send a chariot for you at three o'clock," said Miss Day.

"Not the mower?" I gasped, apprehensively.

"No, nor the hay-rake," she laughed. "Don't let me detract from the novelty of the equipage by telling you what it is in advance. Please be in attendance to assist Miss Tyrrell to her carriage, Mr. Archibald, at the appointed hour," she added, rising.

"With pleasure, if she will permit me. But you are not going, Miss Day?"

"Nay—why this haste?" said Margaret, lifting a detaining hand.

"You seem but to have just arrived, and must you really go?" I questioned, entreatingly, marking, as she balanced herself upon the upper step, the becomingness of her simply-fashioned dress.

"The rural visitor never knows when to leave," she laughed, bowing and running lightly down the steps before Archi-

bald, who looked as if contemplating a walk across the fields with her, could he find opportunity to ask the favor.

"I don't know how I am to get away," he said, sitting down again. "But you heard Miss Day say that a rural visitor enjoys superior privileges."

Cousin Margaret looked at our guest with a smile that would have beguiled him to stay, I thought, even at the cost of duty. Again, while she was exercising her most brilliant and fascinating powers of entertainment, I felt that strange wave of jealousy and aversion stealing over me, and with the excuse of weariness I managed to escape and leave them alone, not without a vague wonder as to what charm Mrs. Heath could find in so young a man that she should seem to hang with breathless interest on his word and look.

CHAPTER VI.

ENFORCED idleness, with the disagreeable confinement and pain attending my injured arm, had somewhat worn upon my spirits, otherwise ruffled by the vexing mystery about Margaret, and I hailed the approach of the hay festival on Saturday afternoon as a kind of relief from the monotony which the city dweller, suddenly transported to country solitudes, is apt to find very near insupportable at times.

Precisely at the appointed hour we were astonished and delighted by the arrival of the "chariot," which Miss Day had promised to send for us. It was a great two-wheeled cart, loosely upholstered with fragrant hay and drawn by a pair of large Devon oxen with broad, white horns tipped with roses, and their yoke wreathed in buttercups and daisies. This rural omnibus was driven by a slouching youth in a palm-leaf hat and loose blue jacket that tipped up in the back as he sat upon the side of the cart and with a long beechen gad directed the movements of the obedient animals.

Swaying this magic wand from side to side with some mysterious intonation, whose meaning I did not grasp, he backed the cart around to the stepping-stones, and, pulling out a board at the rear, nodded to us in expectancy of our ready response to his sign to "Come on!"

Assisted by Mr. Archibald, who had appeared in time to share Miss Day's novel favor, we ascended the vehicle and seated ourselves luxuriously in the late-mown hay with a sense of delight in an experience so new to us.

"No one but this charming girl would have given us or thought to have given us so rare an entertainment," I said, with pride in my friend.

"No, the ordinary young woman would have sent her best horses and a borrowed chaise and had us into the spare-room religiously darkened by green shades and with an atmosphere of stiff solemnity suggestive of ministerial calls and parlor company," remarked Margaret, in a voice beneath the rumble of the great, heavy wheels.

"But a room materially brightened by a kerosene lamp on Sunday evening when the young lady's 'fellow' comes a-wooing and stays till long after the other windows are darkened," amended Archibald from another point of observation.

When we arrived at the gate of entrance to the lake-field, we were a little amused to see the occasion honored by a pair of small flags crossed above the arch and tied by a floating pennon with the motto "Liberty and Equality" printed upon it.

I waved my handkerchief at the national emblem, a demonstration which Archibald swiftly emphasized by a ringing cheer for the red, white, and blue.

"I did not design this as an occasion of national interest and festivity," explained Miss Day, coming forward, with happy greetings, "but a—a friend of mine whom I invited to meet you here rather insisted on contributing this decoration, which you

will probably learn is of great significance to him."

"As to all of us good patriotic citizens," Archibald responded, as he sprang to the ground.

"You will take the ladies over to the shade of the maples yonder, where they will find the comforts of the field parlor," spoke Miss Day to our magician with the beechen wand while she went forward, accompanied by Mr. Archibald.

Midway we met a portly, middle-aged man plying the scattered windrows of hay with a long pitchfork, and before him the great oxen suddenly stopped, with bent heads, as if in adoration of a field divinity.

"I have the honor of presenting my father, Captain Day," announced Esther, coming up at that moment and introducing us in due order to the bearer of the pitchfork, who took off his hat and beamed on us a broad, genial smile of welcome.

"I'm very glad to meet ye all," he said, laying a hand on the shoulder of Esther, who had stepped around to his side with an air that forbade the eye and ear of culture to mock any vulgarity in the man for whom she commanded instant respect. "My girl, Esther," he added, with an admiring look at her, "has some romantic notions which I hope ye'll take to rather kindly. Invitin' city-folks to supper in a hay-field, an' sendin' an ox-cart for ladies to come in is a little too estafedic, don't you think?"

We united in declaring ourselves perfectly delighted with the whole affair, which to us was altogether charming, and, apparently satisfied with our approval, Captain Day resigned the pitchfork to our charioteer and assumed himself the swaying sceptre of beech. As he walked beside us with free voluble speech that never faltered over large words, however puzzling his rendering of them might be to our comprehension, it seemed that we had found the source of Esther's high aspirations which in an uncultivated way appeared just as strong in the father.

The opportunities of a later generation had refined and quickened her powers and given them a more cultured expression, but they were only the flowering out of the parental striving, after all, and between father and daughter there was evident a bond of sympathy very deep and tender. Conscious as she was of his gross violations of grammar and misuse of language, she viewed them with a tolerance that betrayed no offense, and in speaking to him she frequently lapsed into his own errors, as if thereby she would justify and excuse them, or at least save herself from even a delicate rebuke of them.

A fair, plump, comfortable matron, who was presented to us as the mother of Esther, gave us a quiet but entirely cordial reception at the court of the maples, where a quantity of rugs, pillows, and easy chairs offered us hospitable welcome when we chose to avail ourselves of such luxuries. There was also a younger and very timid sister of Miss Day, who regarded us with the painful shyness of a wild bird caught in a snare, and a youth of perhaps fourteen who, being grasped by the collar, was presented to us as Master Rob Day, by his fond father, who good-humoredly assured us that we could be interesting to the young hound according to the information we might be able to give him on the subjects of hunting, fishing, and trapping. But before we could summon any available knowledge upon these points, the youth was off with the waiting oxen, which he directed with a loud hubbubboo of bovine orders, appearing to so far countermand each other that the bewildered animals took to flight and were severely brought to an understanding of requirements by lashing strokes of the beechen rod.

"That young scamp ought-a be tanned with a gad himself," remarked the indulgent father. "But boys will be boys, and as Esther's got a whole posse of them here this afternoon, you'll have an importunity to study the genesis."

"Or to ride on a load of hay through the great barn-door and to climb over the fragrant billows of the piled-up hay, for a peep in the swallows' nests beneath the eaves," suggested Esther, smoothing down the rather rampant collar of her father's fresh linen coat, while the rest of us were expatiating on the pleasure of our privileges.

"Fact is, you can do anything you please," said Farmer Day, smiling broadly. "There's no constriction, as we only left hay enough in the field to make a show of work an' a morsel o' fun for the youngsters."

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, as a very tall, very slender, very dark, very serious young man appeared on the scene with the general air of a self-conscious reformer. "This is John Hugh Russell, my son-in-law elect. Mrs. Heath and Miss Tyrrell. Ha! I guess you know each other, Mr. Archbull. John Hugh's generally feeling round after the political platforms of new derivals. Eh, Esther? Where is that girl? Has she run off through dread of some bomb John's going to throw in the camp? For I s'pose you have one in your pocket, John, as usual."

The very responsible young man, with the apparent care of the nation on his shoulders, bowed stiffly, with the flickering glimmer of a smile on his dark countenance. "I am instructed by Miss Esther," said he, "that this is a pleasure gathering, and no question of public interests is to be broached—"

"Unless, of course, we may discuss it with entire amiability and tolerance for each other's opinions, in which case a mutual benefit might ensue from a light exchange of views," remarked Margaret, swaying easily in her large, old-fashioned rocker under the dense, sweet shadow of the trees.

"I am sure we shall be glad to hear Mr. Russell's frank expression upon any subject of interest to him," I said, adjusting myself comfortably on the rug at

Margaret's feet, and devoting myself to a curious study of Miss Day's lover, who impressed me as a *rara avis* of unknown class.

"You are, I believe, Mr. Russell, an enthusiastic advocate of the rights of the people," politely observed Mr. Archibald, while he worshipfully presented the bouquet of white daisies he had been arranging to Cousin Margaret, who, with a caressing movement of her hand, fastened them to her corsage.

Was it with an eye to the fine contrast of her dark-blue dress that he gave them to her instead of to me, or to—to Miss Day, who was also in white?

"Yes!" said Mr. Russell, with an emphasis that attracted my attention at once from the trifling import of daisies. "Yes, I am, sir, a staunch and unflagging advocate and supporter of the rights of an enslaved class against the oppressive power of a selfish and grasping monopoly. I am, ladies and gentlemen, a thorough and active believer in 'liberty and equality'—mark it!—*equality*!"

Our new friend uttered this last enunciation of his faith with an oratorical flourish and a fierce glare over his small audience, as though he expected a general uprising of the defense on the part of a selfish and grasping monopoly. But Margaret sat smiling and bowing in acknowledgment of his boasted mission. I speechlessly clapped my hands, and Archibald gave an approving wave of his soft summer hat.

"I am too thoroughly an American not to sympathize with your principles," he said, "and all the more that my life has been nurtured in an atmosphere where liberty is only a poet's dream. Returning last year to my native land from the Old World, to which I was taken before my recollection, I was struck, first of all, by the amazing contrast presented by my glorious country in her free institutions and opportunities that give, to every man alike, the liberty to develop and to follow the bent of his own powers—"

"Not so!" interrupted John Hugh Russell, with a conclusive sweep of his arm. "You have taken, as yet, but a superficial view of affairs in this government, if you have not marked the vast and growing preponderance of power on the side of the moneyed class, who are usurping every privilege popularly supposed and quoted as belonging to every free-born citizen, so-called. I tell you, the time has come, when we—some of us—have got to make a stand for the equality over which there is so much empty gush by the demagogues, who are working their best to destroy it."

"Beg pardon!" blandly interposed Archibald, in turn. "One thing, which, above all others, has appealed to my admiration, and of which I am especially and patriotically proud, is the fact that our most worthy and prominent men have risen from the humblest positions—in what my Old-World education would lead me to say the 'lower classes'—and they have so risen by force of their own exertions, on which the fair laws of our fair land lay no restraint, but rather tend to illustrate the Divine truth that 'the gods help those who help themselves.' And it does not appear to me that there is any place of honor and usefulness in the nation that is not open to any intelligent and positive man, who makes the best of his powers and opportunities, to which there is absolutely no limit."

"Approved!" declared Miss Day, who appeared in the midst of Archibald's little address, and was standing beside her father, who sat smiling with satisfaction over the discussion, in which he had not, as yet, shown his colors. "And now give me the last word—a woman's privilege, you know—on this subject of human rights. Resolved, that it is the right of every man to correct the evils which he sees in the world, by beginning first of all with himself, and bringing his own character up to the high standard which he regards as essential to the rulers of

the nation. And, resolved, that by so doing he performs an office of public good that may be supplemented, but cannot be surpassed by any efforts to elevate the mere external condition of his fellows. And, resolved, that we hereby drop the discussion of public measures, and devote ourselves, instead, to the private pleasures for which we have come to the Lake meadow this afternoon."

We responded with a ringing chorus of assent, in which John Hugh, out of native politeness, joined, though I doubted whether he could find any pleasure except in the agitation of his views—an agitation which I fancied he must wage alone in this simple, satisfied community, where I had not dreamed of finding a rampant, raging reformer of the type that I imagined belonged only to cities, and were the leaders and instigators of mobs and riots, though I had a lurking undefined sense of some ground of justice at the bottom of claims that I had never investigated.

"A putty good argerfier, my Esther, aint she?" said the proud father, with a fond look at the flushed face of Miss Day as Archibald sprang forward to arrange a seat for her beside his own.

"Truly, if we had a majority entertaining her high and noble sentiments we could boast of a grander legislation than is possible with the simple patching up of surface conditions, as she says," he responded, admiringly.

"I'm afraid we are getting on the dangerous ground again," Esther said, moving slightly in the direction of John Hugh, who wore a somewhat lowering look. "Since I object to the canvass of public themes at my field tea-party, it is only fair to Mr. Russell to say that we may all hear him on his favorite topic, the rights of the people, at the town hail on Wednesday evening next."

Mr. Russell bowed stiffly in acknowledgment of our unanimous declaration of

purpose to be in attendance on the occasion specified.

"It is not probable," said he, rather loftily, "that you will hear anything which you can indorse without reflection on your own class—in the main a proud aristocracy in league with the moneyed power against which all my principles are arrayed. But I may be able to show indirectly the application of Miss Day's noble sentiments to this very power, which certainly has its share of individual evils to correct, and—"

"Oh! of course," we all agreed, eager to postpone the fuller elucidation of Mr. Russell's views on weighty matters until an occasion when it should not be so out of harmony with the social scheme of our little hostess.

She seized on the silence following our interruption to give some signal to the crowd of boys gathered in the cart, who responded—at an agreeable distance—with a stirring chorus to the Harvest song, quite admirably led by Master Rob.

After this harmonizing influence, it was easier to drift into general conversation in which Cousin Margaret, with her charming tact, led every one to bear a consciously important part.

We were more and more delighted with Captain Day, who, we learned, had enlisted as a private in the war of the Rebellion, and risen by valiant service to the rank giving him the title which had slightly puzzled me at first. Like all of our brave soldiers, he had a fund of army reminiscences, both sad and humorous, of which he gave us snatches with surprising bursts of language that kept us on the *qui vive* for the unknown and unexpected riches in his vocabulary.

Nothing that Mr. Archibald told us, on solicitation from Miss Day and Mrs. Heath, about the treasures and builders of art in the Old World half so much interested me as the simple relations of the Captain about the preservation of the liberties of the New World. As for

Mr. Russell, he appeared altogether indifferent to both, offering only an occasional remark bearing more or less on his favorite subject, which had apparently engrossed his best powers. It somewhat surprised me to observe that, while he talked rapidly, eloquently, and well on his special hobby, he fell into errors, and exhibited a lamentable ignorance when he spoke at any length on any other topic under consideration, sending a flame of color to the cheek of his sweetheart, who immediately covered his blunder by some witty sally that left no embarrassing pause for mental remark. But there was no such sign of confusion when the Captain delightfully electrified us with the coruscations of a word unknown to the great lexicographers. The respectful daughter smiled sympathetically in his face, and gave no start of alarm lest the ear of culture should be shocked by any gross violation of orthoepic or grammatical laws. Her look said, "He is greater than these. The good, noble soul of him existed before them."

All in all, the afternoon was passing very pleasantly and swiftly, with a cordial feeling of good-fellowship generally promoted, no doubt, by a mutual sympathy of taste in the direction of the delicate and delicious fare dispensed from the little table at which Mrs. Day quietly but hospitably presided, while Esther and the shy-dove sister pressed upon us the dainties provided for our delectation.

The jolly young hay-makers, quite ready to turn into a festival the task allotted to them, enjoyed with greater haste and more hearty relish the refreshments served to them under a neighboring group of trees, enlivening the feast as they had enlivened the labor with noisy jokes and songs more remarkable for vigorous expression than for musical harmony, though, as a hay-field entertainment, we voted it a success by one or two plaudits and encores.

A darkening shadow on the scene at length started Captain Day to his feet

with apprehension for the last ungarnered load of hay.

"Looks like a shower," he remarked, with a squint at the low cloud in the west, "an' I guess I better be putting myself to the front o' that company of voluncheers, which 'pears to be getting on a rampant."

We all ran out to look at the cloud hidden from our view by the screen of willows bordering the lake behind us. I say all, but that collective form of speech does not include Mrs. Heath and young Archibald, who sat under the maples, so closely engaged in the recall of delightful Venitian memories common to both that they seemed unconscious of immediately transpiring events.

The Captain and John Hugh moved off to hasten the loading and transfer of hay to the great barn at the farther extremity of the long meadow. Mrs. Day and her younger daughter returned to gather into baskets the dishes and remnants of our loaves and fishes, while Esther and I walked further out to gaze at the rising cloud, which seemed tossed by an inward tumult that uttered itself in quivers of lightning and low growlings of thunder.

"It makes me think of Mr. Russell," I said, involuntarily. "I mean those black, curling fringes suggest the ripple of his profuse wind-blown hair," I added, with a laughing attempt to explain my unpremeditated analogy. "Men of his strong type appear to find a crowning glory in long hair, wherein, possibly, they seek, by some subtle and unconscious instinct, the power of a Sampson, unbetrayed by the witching fingers of an artful Delilah."

"You do not like him," Esther said, leaping straight to the point over my stumbling figures of speech.

"Did I say so?" I demanded. "I am too much interested in him to have analyzed my personal feeling as yet. The first test of that, I believe, is your answer to this question: 'Does he make you happy?'"

"Ah!—what a question that to put to an 'engaged' young woman," laughed Esther, evasively. "I have been reading a philosopher lately who makes the first question in love not a matter of happiness—but of blessedness."

"Yes? Why I thought the terms synonymous. Is not one happy who is blest?" I queried.

"Why, a thunder-cloud that reminds you of John Russell is a blessing, no doubt, but it doesn't make us happy, does it?" she answered, lightly, glancing off from the point I had pressed. "See, those curling waves of hair have rolled to the zenith, they look as if they might be brooding a blast of dynamite, which is not, I hope, the use for which John is cultivating his ambrosial locks. We shall have to make speed to reach the house before the shower. Ho, Daniel! rush for the horses and carriage to take us and our traps from the field. No dallying, boy!"

A vivid flame of lightning and a heavy boom of thunder emphasized the order so peremptorily given. The whole sky had darkened, a strong wind had risen, and the birds were circling over our heads with notes of warning or alarm, though the happy-go-lucky robin was ecstatically trilling his delicious rain-song in the willows by the lake.

Margaret and Archibald had risen from their *tête-à-tête* when we went back to the maples, and stood gazing in a kind of absent wonder at our preparations for departure. Did Margaret really know that there was a tempest in the air, and that the cannonade of heaven was thundering over her head?

"Let us walk on and not wait for the carriage," I said, with some eagerness.

"Is there any haste?" mildly questioned Margaret, while Archibald absently gathered up her shawl and wrapped it about her with lover-like devotion.

"It—there is, I think, an appearance of rain," he said gently, with that unconscious glance at the sky which a man gives his watch, without the slightest perception of the time indicated, when his thought is elsewhere.

We laughed at this temperate forecast of the weather as we started out in the frowning face of the cloud that seemed ready to burst in wrath upon us. Off at the right the last load of hay, on which I had contemplated the pleasure of a ride, was being rapidly tumbled into a mountainous height that dwarfed the huge oxen before it to pigmies swaying with slow, labored movement toward the opening of the field through which the horses and carriage, for which the youth Dan had been dispatched, were just appearing.

"Let us wait," said Esther. "We gain nothing by hurrying forward, and we leave our traps in the rear."

"Ah!" cried Margaret, with sudden sense of loss. "I have left something—something valuable to me—a package that I accidentally drew from my pocket and forgot, while talking with you, to restore—"

"I will run back and find it," said Archibald, rapidly retracing his steps, half followed by Margaret, whose anxiety seemed to exceed my estimate of her loss.

While we waited, a blinding flash of lightning, followed by an instant crash of thunder that shook the earth under our feet, wrung an involuntary exclamation of dread from our lips. What we saw when the dazzling flame passed was the tallest tree of the group we had just left riven from branch to root, and Archibald, at a little distance, reeling and falling under the shock.

With a bound Margaret gained the spot where he had dropped, and was on her knees beside him, her arms beneath his head, her lips pressing kisses on his face, her voice tenderly beseeching him to speak.

With the swiftness of lightning the thought swept through my mind, as we hurried after her, that she had known Archibald across the sea, where there must have been some relationship that ex-

plained the mystery of her behavior toward him.

When we reached the pair Margaret had fainted, and both were lying at our feet as senseless as the dead.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ST. VALENTINE'S CHURCH DONATION.

THE room was certainly neither cozy, homelike, or cheerful.

The carpet was faded, the hair-cloth furniture was worn and scratched, and there were none of those little ornaments and fancy decorations which go far toward making a room attractive and inviting—even pictures were wanting—and the walls looked bare and cold.

Two people were seated at a small, square table in front of the grate, which held a few flickering embers—the man, a little past middle-age, with iron-gray hair, keen, dark eyes, and rather a stern, severe cast of features, seemed deeply engrossed with the evening paper; the woman bent over her work and sewed steadily.

She had an attractive, sensible face—pleasant gray eyes, a firm mouth, and soft, wavy, brown hair.

Once or twice she looked up as if about to speak, and then continued her work in silence.

At length, however, her mind seemed made up, and, turning to her companion, she said:

"Reuben, the minister has been here again to-day."

"Has he?" briefly returned Deacon Cymon, without raising his eyes. After

waiting a moment, she went on, her cheeks flushing slightly:

"Yes, this is the third time he has called, and I have asked you twice before this what I should tell him, but you give no answer. I wish you would see him yourself, but you are away so much. I suppose it is uncertain when you will, and now I want to know—if he calls again—what am I to say—in other words, how much do you intend giving toward the building of the new church?"

Deacon Cymon laid down his paper.

"You can tell him," he said, slowly, "that I sha'n't give one red cent—not one Canada copper."

"Reuben Cymon! you don't mean it! and you, a deacon in the church!" His wife spoke with mingled surprise and indignation,

"But I *do* mean it," he answered, coldly. "The hall where we hold meetings answers every purpose—the rent is trifling, and we can have it as long as we like. It isn't the thing to be forever thinking what we *want*, how fine and desirable such or such a thing would be; it is much better to ask 'Is it positively needful?' 'Can we not do without it?'"

"You are a very generous, public-

spirited man, Deacon Cymon," the lady said, somewhat sarcastically; "you, with your thousands and tens of thousands, refusing to give even a small sum toward the building of a house of worship, when you know it is a disgrace to the place to be without one; and, if it is so much better (as you say) to ask, 'Is such a thing absolutely needful?' 'Can we not do without it?' I ask you, is so much money as you are hoarding and piling up positively needful? Can we not do without, at least, a little of it?"

The Deacon looked bewildered for a moment, then he answered, impressively:

"I am saving my money for a *purpose*." (Perhaps he would hardly have been willing to admit that his sole "purpose" was the mere gratification of knowing that he had it.) "Yes, I am laying up what money I can, for a purpose, and I don't propose to part with it at every man's beck and call."

"Reuben"—and the woman's eyes grew very earnest—"don't you know how much a church is needed here? this is a growing place, there are mills, factories, stores, building up all around us, and we want schools and a church. You refused to give toward the new school-house, insisting that that old, made-over shop was good enough for the children to study in, and now you say that dark, ill-ventilated hall answers every purpose for public worship. We have three boys growing up, and is this the way to lead them to become interested in either learning or religion? For the sake of the young people, and for the credit and good of the place, do give something toward this church, Reuben!"

The man folded the paper and smoothed it on his knee; presently he said, shortly:

"I have said I sha'n't give a penny, and I sha'n't. The fact is, I haven't anything to spare, my money is all disposed of in other ways."

Margie Cymon's eyes flashed ominously

under their long lashes. "The fact is, Reuben Cymon," she said, impetuously, "you are growing too mean for anything; all you care for, is just to make one dollar bring in another; you have scrimped and pinched here at home, till life is no comfort, and now you refuse to give a cent toward any public good—it isn't even decent. You may be sure of one thing, however, you'll lose enough some day to open your eyes, and make you put what you have left to a better use!"

The Deacon involuntary put his hand to his breast-pocket, where were two bonds of one thousand dollars each, which he had taken from the bank that day, to invest, in company with two or three of his business friends, in a very promising grain speculation.

He knew that Mrs. Cymon was not destitute of a temper, and he knew also that she very seldom made a display of it, and, furthermore, he was fully aware that when she did see fit to manifest it, "discretion was the better part of valor" on his part, and conciliation was much preferable to opposition, so he said, with unusual mildness, "I can donate to any public institutions, or to all of them, any time in the future, and really, I think we have all the necessities of life, Margie; the Lord condemns extravagance, and the Bible extols the prudent man."

"I think," she answered, quickly, "that the Lord meant we should have some of the beauties and pleasures of life as well as the bare necessities. I *know* He did, for He has made the sweet lilies and roses, as well as the cornstalks and potato vines, and the birds and butterflies, as well as the cows and oxen; but keep on in your own way, Deacon Cymon, and you will be likely to find out where it will lead to, better than anybody can tell you," and gathering up her work, she left the room.

Sitting alone, Deacon Cymon meditated not on his own close, penurious habits, and the harm and discomfort engendered

by them, but on his wife's words "you will be sure to lose enough to open your eyes," etc. Again and again they recurred to his mind; he thought of them till they seemed almost to possess the force of prophecy. At length he said, halfaloud, in nervous anxiety, as he drew the precious bonds from his pocket:

"I can't take these back to the bank, for I may want them at any moment, and then, again, I may not use them for two or three days, as I must wait the motion of 'Squire Henshaw. Where will they be safe in the meantime?"

The Deacon had no safe—as his wife had said—he was too busy "making one dollar bring in another," ever to have money enough on hand to need a safe.

He could lock them up in his desk, but *there* would be the first place burglars would probably look for them; no, that never would answer, he must put them where no one would dream of looking.

He glanced around the room, and tried to think of some secure place of deposit, but none occurred to him. Finally, he replaced the papers in his pocket, and, taking up the lamp, proceeded to the kitchen for a drink of water.

Opening the pantry-door to get a tumbler, he espied an old coffee-urn, which had stood for months and months in a farther corner of the top-shelf. Bottles, empty fruit-cans, one or two cracked earthen jars and other articles discarded from use, surrounded it, and the Deacon at once decided *there* was just the place for his papers; in that old concern they would be as safe as if they were in the bank.

So he forthwith brought a stool—climbed up—took down the old coffee-urn, and finding it empty placed his bonds carefully within, shut down the antique conical cover and pushed it back into the corner it had occupied unmolested for so long a time. Then he went out and closed the door behind him, with a feeling of satisfaction and relief, that his treas-

ures were at last securely disposed of—so very little did he know of the events of the future.

Two or three days passed by, when one morning, as Mrs. Cymon was busily washing the breakfast dishes, a little voice called out:

"Say, mamma, who is Valentine anyway?"

The lady paused, and said, in some surprise, "Valentine—who is he—what do you mean, child?"

"Why, Ned Brown just said 'twas Valentine's day, to-day, and who's he, and what makes it any more his day than anybody else's?" and little Fred Cymon leaned his elbows on the table and rested his rosy cheeks in his little fat hands, eager for an answer.

"Oh! yes, so it is, the fourteenth of February—and it is a sort of custom," mamma explained, "for people to send fancy cards, verses, and pictures to other people, whom they like—on this day—and these little love-tokens are called valentines. St. Valentine was—" but here came a sudden interruption.

The kitchen-door opened and the fresh, fair face of Molly Bryan appeared. "Och! Misthress Cymon," she said, in full, pleasant tones. "Heavin's blessin' rest on ye, me mither's improvin', thanks to yerself, and could ye make use of me for this day?"

"Hired help" was not one of the "necessities of life," according to Deacon Cymon's ideas, so this friendly offer of assistance was very acceptable to the overworked woman. Wiping her hands, she said, thoughtfully, "I hardly know what wants doing most, Molly—but I guess we'll clean the pantry—it hasn't been put to rights for months."

And so, in the course of a few moments, Mrs. Cymon had mounted a chair and commenced clearing the shelves—handing the things to Molly—who placed them upon the long kitchen-table.

Master Freddie, with his seven years

of inquisitiveness and meddling curiosity, was very busy examining this, that, and the other, and asking the usual amount of boyish questions.

At length the old coffee-urn attracted his attention, and lifting the cover, he pulled out the precious bonds. "Oh! say," he exclaimed, rolling them into as small a compass as possible, that his request might not seem too exorbitant a one, and holding them up, "say, mayn't I have these?"

"What are they, what have you got hold of now?" his mother asked, looking hurriedly toward him.

"Nothing, only some old papers with some pictures on to 'em," and Molly added:

"They aint no account, mum; was in the ould coffee-pot to kape out the damp. Miss Barnes, she puts papers in tin and brita'ny, and sich loike, to kape off the rust."

"Yes, you can have them; now go away and cut the pictures out, and be a good boy and don't bother us any more," said the busy mother.

Fred walked off with his prize, presently turning back, however, to call out, "Say, mamma, where's a letter-cover and the scissors?"

Mrs. Cymon smiled to herself, as she thought "Some one will get a valentine now," but she told him where to find the articles—and after some rummaging and hunting, he at length possessed himself of them, and—seated on the back-stairs—prepared to make his valentines. When he unfolded the papers, however, the pictures seemed so small, and there were so many large, handsome letters, that, after much deliberation, he finally decided (as mamma had said there was reading on valentines) they would do very well, just as they were.

Then came another period of lengthy meditation as to who should be the recipient of this (to him) all-important valentine; at length, however, a bright

idea seemed to strike him, and he said, earnestly, to himself, "I'll do it; I'll just do it, he's the best of the whole lot." Then, much delighted, he folded the papers up, crowded them into the big envelope, sealed them tightly, and then started in quest of his elder brother, Herbert, whom he saw writing in the dining-room, when he went to get the scissors.

"Say—now—look here, sir," he began, as he marched rather consequentially up to the table. "I want you to just write on this for me."

"Who is it to?" inquired Herbert, reaching out for the envelope.

"Oh! you can write 'Mr. Preacher Raymond, Sayville Corner, Box No. 239.'"

"What under the sun and skies is it?" asked his brother, much amused.

"Well, if you must know, it's a valentine," returned master Fred, with dignity; "papers with pictures and reading onto 'em, you know."

"Old circus posters as likely as any way," thought Herbert, and, laughing outright as he imagined the clergyman's surprise at receiving such a document, he wrote:

"Rev. Silas T. Raymond, Sayville Corner, P. O. Box 239."

And Fred at once started for the office to drop it in the letter-box.

"I'm real glad he's goin' to have it," he thought, as he was hurrying along, "'cause he was no end good, bringing me grapes and oranges when I had the fever, and such nice books to see the pictures;" suddenly he stopped short—it had just occurred to him that Mr. Raymond would not know who sent this valentine.

So, taking out his pencil and placing the envelope on a large stone by the roadside (notwithstanding his knowledge of chirography was rather limited), he managed to write very plainly in one corner the name, R. F. Cymon, which happened to be his father's name as well as his own.

This done, he hastened on, and his valentine was soon awaiting delivery.

The evening closed in cold and windy; a brighter fire than usual burned in the grate, and Deacon Cymon sat before it thinking with much satisfaction, that, on the morrow, his two thousand dollars would be in a fair way to double themselves, as 'Squire Henshaw had just notified him that the prospect was most promising, and they would proceed at once to business.

A sudden sound at the door-bell interrupted his meditations, and a moment later Mr. Raymond had entered the room. Deacon Cymon was in such a comfortable frame of mind, that he was prepared to give the pastor quite a cordial welcome; he was not prepared, however, for the strong, warm grasp of the hand with which he was greeted; he was not prepared, as he looked up, to see either the tears in the eyes of his caller, or the earnest, grateful look upon his face, and he was still less prepared to hear a voice trembling with emotion, in spite of all efforts to steady it, saying: "I cannot find words to thank you, Deacon Cymon, or to make you understand the great good you have done this place, and the encouragement and help you have given me, personally, by your unexpected and noble-hearted liberality; I may be able to write sermons and talk to my people, but when I think of all the benefits which are sure to result from your generous donations, I cannot express half I feel, and can only say that every good deed is sure to bring its own reward, if not always in this world, surely it will in the next. May God bless and reward you and yours a thousand-fold."

Deacon Cymon stood in bewildered surprise while the pastor spoke, but a vague impression was arising in his mind that his bonds must have been interfered with, and, as Mr. Raymond paused, he slowly passed his hand over his forehead as if collecting his thoughts, and said, very faintly:

"Heavens! has any one found that old coffee-pot?"

A mystified, puzzled expression rested upon the clergyman's face for a moment, but, immediately attributing the Deacon's strange words and manners to a sort of embarrassment at hearing his generosity so highly commended, and construing his allusion to coffee as a confessed invitation for him to stop and have some refreshment, he hastened to say:

"Not to-night, my friend; no coffee to-night, thanks; my evening class is waiting, but I thought (even to the neglect of all other duties) I must say one word of thanks for, and appreciation of, your most timely and liberal assistance. I will bid you good evening now," he added, glancing at his watch, "asking you to excuse my haste, and promising to see you again soon."

The Deacon stood a few moments after Mr. Raymond's departure, struggling to understand the situation in which he found himself, then he stepped to the door and rather peremptorily summoned his wife.

The interview which followed was, for a short space of time, stormy and irate on the Deacon's part, and also not a little enigmatical to the lady, as her spouse took it for granted that she was in some way the author of this strange complication of affairs.

At length, however, after the Deacon had grown somewhat calmer and Mrs. Cymon began to understand the case a little, she saw at once how it had all happened. Quietly and clearly she explained what she had innocently and unwittingly done, and that in all probability Fred's valentine was very naturally believed by Mr. Raymond to be a donation from his father.

As the Deacon began to comprehend the circumstances, he saw, of course, that no blame could be justly attached to any one, and when Mrs. Cymon concluded her recital with a merry laugh, and, looking

up at him with roguish, sparkling eyes, said:

"You know, Reuben, I never would have disposed of any of your money without your leave, but I must say I am heartily glad it has gone just where it has. To be sure, it is quite a sum, but you have never given to anything else, and this will make up for past deficiencies."

She seemed so much, just then, like the Margie Denton of former years, and resembled so little the jaded, tired, discouraged woman, working on day after day with seldom a touch of her former light-hearted cheerfulness, that her husband regarded her with an absent look and a twinge of conscience at the change his own neglect and penuriousness had wrought in her for a moment, and then said, quite pleasantly and resignedly:

"Well, Margie, I see no way but to let things go as they are, only you tutor the boy and make him know he's to keep silent on the valentine question, for I think I'll take the *credit* of this business to myself as long as the *loss* is mine."

And so Deacon Cymon informed 'Squire Henshaw & Co. that he had decided not to speculate that time, but had disposed of his money elsewhere, and for a few days the great church donation was the theme of village gossip, and then talk died away, and all went on as usual.

It was a Sabbath in June, and, as one of our finest poets has said:

"What is so rare as a day in June—
Then, if ever, come perfect days,
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune—
And over it softly her warm ear lays."

Yes, it was an almost perfect Sabbath when the first services were held in the new church at Sayville Corner.

As Deacon Cymon and his family walked up the aisle, the scent of fresh roses was in the air, and a sweet, solemn, restful quiet seemed to fill the house.

The exercises were simple and very impressive; the Deacon felt strangely moved

as he heard the words of the text, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," and he listened, almost spell-bound, to the clear, forcible eloquence that proved how comparatively worthless—how really unsatisfying all "treasures" laid up here on earth are; how signally these treasures fail to bring true peace and lasting happiness unless used unselfishly and for the good of others, and when used thus, how they become blessings—spiritual treasures of real value—which "neither moth nor rust can corrupt," for they are laid up in the Heaven that comes of a good and useful life.

After the close of worship, Deacon Cymon drew his wife's arm within his own and walked thoughtfully homeward.

At the gate he paused.

"Margie," he said, slowly, "I think my eyes are opened at last, and I have learned a lesson. Henceforth life shall be different to you and to me and to the children from what it has been, for life amounts usually to just what we make it. I can see now that I have been heedless and blind, as every one is who takes *self-interest* for his only guide."

"Let me tell you," he went on, after a moment's silence, "that two thousand dollars that I gave (or rather, which Fred gave for me) to that church was the best investment I ever made. That grain speculation turned out a total failure—prices went down most unexpectedly, and those interested lost heavily. But the fact of my giving so largely for the public benefit has somehow strengthened the confidence of influential parties in my means and position, financially, and business has never been so plenty or so profitable as of late.

"I think, however," he added, a little hesitatingly, "that I am sailing under false colors, and have been getting credit for what I did not do—credit which I do not deserve—so I have decided to explain that valentine business to Mr. Raymond. It will be rather a humiliating confession,

but I feel that it ought to be made, and shall hope to retrieve my character in his estimation hereafter.

"You were hardly right, Margie, in saying that I should some day *lose* enough to make me put to a better use what was

left, but (and here don't understand me as referring to mere money matters) I trust I have *gained* enough never to be backward in the future in any good work."

And he never was.

MINNIE TAYLOR.

THE DIVIDING LINE.

I WAS spending a few months in the pine forests of the Northwest. The doctors had decided that my lungs were weak, confinement in-doors would make them worse, my father had died of consumption; in solemn family conclave it was decided that I must run from my enemy before he approached to plant his banners on the citadel.

So having warningly assured my mother that she had turned me out-of-doors, and might expect me to turn out a modern Prodigal Son, I closed my protest, and was whirled away from my luxurious Eastern home to seek the invigorating breath of the balmy pine forest, and share the fare of the hardy lumbermen who gather there to lay waste Nature's beauty and glory, and through the alchemy of their brawny muscles convert the forests treasures into gold.

The men were rough but good-hearted fellows, ready for any rude fun that would raise a laugh, but with a rough word of sympathy, too, for one in trouble, and when they learned the cause of my sojourn among them, they showed in many good-natured ways their willingness to make my visit pleasant and helpful.

We were not very far from one of the

ambitious little towns that spring up so readily to anchor such progress as the tide of civilization may drift toward the setting sun, and many of the men had homes there, from which they came each day at early dawn; but there was also the camp boarding-house, kept in a long, shanty-roofed, log structure, where most of the men ate and lodged; and there were, besides, a few picturesque log-cabins, with their tiny roofs thatched with pine boughs under the feathery, drifting snow, and in one of these, soothed by the sigh of the wind in the drooping branches of the pines, breathing healing balm in their sweet, balsamic odors, charmed by all the wild, fantastic beauty of a scene so novel and interesting, I felt myself rapidly becoming like a new man.

All the languor and weariness had vanished like a dream, and my appetite had become a voracious reality.

I had engaged a hardy, handy young Frenchman as cook and general factotum, and in my cabin had one of the patent stoves with all sorts of appurtenances, but never did food taste so utterly delicious as the lumberman fare, cooked in the genuine backwood's style, over or under an outdoor fire!

The shanty boarding-house was good of its kind, but my honest Pierre could put more poetry into eating than I ever got under any sky but that that peeped down upon us through the interstices of the great pines.

What famous baked beans could ever equal those that he used to draw in their little black kettle from under the glowing coals of our great, blazing fire, built between two logs, and sending warmth and cheer clear into the interior of our little hut? Who ever tasted such venison as he broiled there, its odor on the clear winter air enough to make an anchorite forget his vows? What potatoes, roasted there under the bed of fiery ashes, ever came to table such bursting balls of mealy whiteness as those that Pierre's deft fingers brought to me, rolled in a napkin, food fit for the gods! And the coffee! Oh! slops and slush of civilized tables, avault with shame, that ye should usurp the name of this golden nectar of the savage wilds!

What wonder that the patent stove should be looked upon with contempt, and the Prodigal Son wax fat upon his fare!

Slumber, on my bed of scented pine boughs, was like a lotos dream, lulled "by the voices of the pines."

But with the early dawn there was no more sleep. While yet the last lazy stars were hesitating to take their flight, came the clangor of bells, the rattling of chains, the voices of the busy men, and the squeak and grind of the heavy sleighs, as they slipped away through the creaking snow. Often Pierre and I were up with the rest, muffled like Laplanders, ready for a brisk ride, with the long chains trailing and clanking behind us, to spend the day in the keen frosty air, out in the busy crowd of choppers.

Often, too, I took long walks by myself—exploring, as I called it. Sometimes my walk led to the village, but not often, except when I went to receive my letters at the evening mail. I was so infatuated

with my savage life, that I did not care to leave it or to seek the society that offered. But, one day, as my walk led me toward the village limits, although still far from its streets or dwellings, my attention was suddenly attracted by the notes of a violin. Played by no cultured hand, but full of a wierd power and pathos that almost brought the tears to my eyes. "Some poor, homesick fellow!" I thought, pityingly, and almost involuntarily turned my steps in the direction of the sound.

Imagine my surprise, as I parted the boughs that concealed from me the unknown musician, to see before me a young girl, small, slim, and graceful as a silver birch. One slender foot rested upon a mossy log, her scarlet shawl had slipped from her shoulders and lay in a brilliant mass behind her on the snow, as she stood with head slightly back and her eyes lifted to the tossing branches beyond, as if her thoughts were far away.

So absorbed was she that my approach was unheeded, until a snapping branch revealed my proximity.

Then, with a startled movement, her arms fell at her side, and as she turned her head her eyes met mine. Such lovely, dark, pathetic eyes! One often hears of hunters telling of the look in the eyes of a wounded deer, but I never saw it in any human eyes but hers. Half frightened, half appealing, for one moment they rested on mine, then she turned, and gathering up her shawl drew it about her, and, parting the tangled branches beyond her, stepped hastily away. But in her haste she made a false step, her foot slipped, and in an instant she was thrown heavily into the underbrush.

A slight cry told me that she was hurt, and in a moment I was at her side.

"Forgive me," I cried, "for startling you so! I assure you I had not the faintest idea of seeing a lady. But the sound of your violin—"

"Ah, yes! my poor violin! I fear it is broken!"

"No," I replied, lifting it from the ground, "it is uninjured. But you—I am sure you are hurt!—I heard you cry out! and all through my stupidity! for I see now that I not only frightened you by my approach, but also cut off your retreat by the way you came, and forced you into this wilderness of fallen trees. Now, at least, tell me how you are hurt, and allow me to assist you."

"It is my ankle, monsieur, I fear it is sprained, I slipped so quickly on that icy log. But if you will give me your hand for a little help I think I can get upon my feet."

I gently lifted her up, but at the first attempt to stand, she cried out, and would again have fallen had I not caught her upon my arm. For an instant the blood receded from her face, leaving her very lips colorless, and I thought she was about to faint. But with a brave effort she rallied.

"It is worse than I thought," she said, hesitatingly.

"It is broken, I am afraid," I replied, "and we must have a doctor at once. But first I must assist you home."

"No, no, I could not trouble you, monsieur!" she said, hastily. "But if you were going to the village, and could tell my brother, at the first house as you go in from the camp—" then she paused, suddenly, and a swift flush mounted to her very brow, as, drooping her heavy lashes, she added, apologetically, "You see, monsieur, I have sometimes seen you as you passed, and Louis, my brother, said you were the sick gentleman who was at the camp for his health."

I laughed a little, as I looked at my sturdy length of limb, and thought how little this description seemed to apply to me, now, after three months of banqueting in the frozen depths of the forest. But immediately my anxiety for the poor child so quietly suffering at my side, recalled me to the present.

"Your home is but a short distance,"

I said; "you must let me carry you. It will not do to wait longer, with your limb paining you, and besides it will soon be so swollen that the doctor cannot so easily tell the extent of the injury."

"But Louis could bring his sledge," she protested, "and you could not—I am far too heavy—much heavier than I look."

"A sledge through this underbrush! Impossible!" I replied. "No, you must submit to my judgment, since I am the cause of your accident, and let me get you cared for at once. I am quite able, I assure you. I am well now; you see, that makes a difference. Ah! if you could but see the dinners I dispose of!" trying by a little badinage to chase the scared look from her pale face.

As she smiled a little at this, I bent and wrapped her more closely, put the violin into her keeping, and lifted her in my arms. Such a lithe, slender little thing! She seemed scarcely more than a child, and her light weight hardly impeded me as I followed slowly back the trail of the little feet, that I now saw were moccasined.

As I cast furtive glances at the face against my shoulder, I found myself wondering who and what she was. The smooth skin—a clear brunette with a touch of sunny-brown in its depths—seemed to speak of alien blood, but the dark hair clustering in waves and curls about her forehead, had also a glint of sunshine, and the fine, delicate features, and smooth, soft accent of the voice, bore no hint of foreign origin.

But I could not rid myself of the impression that I had somewhere seen her before. And at last it suddenly came back to me—a night when I first came to the northern woods, that I had attended a great village ball, one of the characteristic gatherings of this primitive country, where he who would might come to share the revelry, always providing that he paid the necessary bills and conducted

himself according to the local code of manners.

These matters complied with, all alike, rich or poor, white or mixed blood, had equal right to the privileges of the ball-room, and here, to the sound of many violins, a French horn, and a huge bass viol, would merry feet follow the mazes of the dance until the daylight put the dancers to rout.

And thus, an interested spectator of the animated scene, I had seen before the light form now resting in my arms.

But then, all arrayed in crimson, she had flitted and swung through the crowd of dancers like some bright bird. So light of foot, so dainty and graceful in every motion, that I had asked who she was.

"Oh! a half-breed girl!" was the half-unwilling answer, given with a shrug of the shoulders.

"French?" I asked.

"No; her mother is the daughter of a missionary that came here years ago, a New England zealot who felt it his duty to immolate his wife and children at the shrine of the Indians. Brought them here among the savages when there was no other white man within hundreds of miles; taught his children to regard them as equals—behold the result!" spreading his hands, with an expressive gesture.

"Here are the children—that is Louis, the boy,"—pointing to a tall, handsome youth who stood at the corner of the room—"and the girl you spoke of—bright, handsome creatures, far enough ahead of their fellows here; but that only makes it the worse for them. They are under a curse! Yes, sir! though you might not believe it up here, where the French and Indian inter-marriages are no uncommon thing. But it is a fact. And they are cultivated and refined and feel it all the more on that account.

"The mother bore her life as long as she could, then she separated from her Indian husband, and he went back to his tribe.

Her children have been brought up as distinct from their savage ancestry as you or I; but do you suppose their white neighbors ever let them forget it? The girl has been sent away to school, has a fine education, is a perfect lady, and both she and her brother are fine musicians, but what do you suppose it does for them? just adds to the jealousy and dislike of those who are their real inferiors in education and ability, and makes their stabs and taunts cut deeper.

"But that girl Katherine is a proud little thing. I've stood by when some contemptuous thing was said in her presence on purpose to torture her, and seen her grow as white as death, but she never flinched any more than the soldier at the cannon's mouth; she just held up her head and her eyes never wavered.

"Of course, the half-bloods and French class here are no companions for them, and the whites just half tolerate them at times, as you see to-night, and snub them cruelly at others. Curse 'em!" he added, viciously, as he tugged at his gray mustache, and looked across the room, with a suspicious moisture in his eyes, to where the brilliant little figure was whirling and swaying in the dance.

How vividly now recurred to me the whole scene and conversation as I held the quiet form in my arms.

A wave of great pity swept over me as I thought of the hard fate her young life had to bear, and I knew now why the dark, beautiful eyes held the sorrowful shadow of the pain that her lips were too proud to speak.

Soon, however, I stood within her simple home, and had explained the accident to her mother. As Louis was not at home, I then inquired my way to the doctor's office and started out to obtain his aid.

On reaching there, I found the doctor to be the gentleman who had been my informant at the dance. He recognized me at once, and in a few words I told him that I had, unfortunately, been the cause

of an accident to the young lady of whom we had spoken, and therefore felt that I could but see that she had every attention, and slipping a bill into his hand, I hurried away.

But not so easily could I escape from myself and my thoughts.

Pierre's supper did not have its usual relish, and for the first time my bed of pine boughs did not give me rest. I tumbled and tossed, and welcomed with joy the early clank and clangor of teams, and the cheerful voices of the men, proclaiming the new day.

I knew the name of my complaint, although in all my life of twenty-five years it had never seriously threatened me before; and undauntedly I faced and owned it.

I knew that if I was not hopelessly in love, I was very near it. Yes, let the world say what it might, I felt myself ready to gather my little wildwood blossom to my heart and let all else pass by.

The memory of the light form in my arms, the warmth against my heart—nay, *within* my heart, as she lay against it, thrilled me with intense delight.

I was my own master, why should I not win this new-found treasure for my own, to have and to hold forever?

My mind was made up, I would win her if I could, "let come what come would!"

It was not hard to find my way to her presence. Inquiry about her sprained ankle—fortunately it was not broken—then little attentions during the days that she had to be confined to chair and bandage, it all came naturally enough.

At first she was shy and distant, but books, music, long readings, and frequent chats soon melted her reserve, and we became like old friends.

I soon saw that her life was far from being a happy one, at home, any more than abroad. Stinted in the means necessary to surround herself with such things as she best loved, shut away from

the society of those capable of appreciating her gifts of nature or education, and shut away, too, from the natural affection that should have been hers by birth to compensate for the cruelty of a fate for which she was blameless.

Her mother was a thin, querulous woman, grown bitter and irritable under the consequences of her own rash act, of which her children were a constant reminder. Proud, sensitive, alone, a pitiable result of the religious zeal that holds human martyrdom as the price necessary for heavenly happiness.

Poor Katherine! More and more, as the weeks went by, as I learned to know, yes, and to love her better, did I long to take her away from it all, and heal, with tenderest love, her bruised spirit and wounded heart.

And at last, one day out in the green, winter woods, won to her side, as at first, by the tones of her beloved violin, which she often played there because her mother "hated it," I told her of my love, and asked her to be my wife.

For a moment she looked at me incredulously. Then she laughed, a short, bitter laugh.

"So all men are alike, after all," she said, slowly. "But I had thought better of you, Mr. Carleton."

"What do you mean, Katherine?" I asked, in amazement. "What do you find in my avowal to call forth your anger? Am I to blame that I love you, and lay my heart and all that I have at your feet?"

"Oh! no," she said, still in the same bitter tone of quiet scorn, but with a bright red spot of color rising and burning on either cheek, and the soft splendor of her eyes glowing like flame, "but I decline your kindness all the same. One does not need to have some lessons in life repeated."

Then she turned on me with sudden passion. "I have heard such words before," she said. "Do you think me an ig-

norant child because I have accepted your kindnesses and believed in your friendship?" a sudden dew of tears softening for an instant the flame of her eyes. "Well, I am not! I am a woman, with a woman's heart! I can feel, and love, and suffer, although," with infinite scorn, "I am a half-breed."

"Listen to my delightful experience: Four years ago, when I was at school, a silly girl of sixteen, I had not quite learned the measure of the world's charity, and thought I had a right to be estimated according to my own merit, and not for what I was not responsible for. I was allowed for a little while to forget that I was not as others were. I was ambitious, and sought to excel in all that was required of me. And in those happy days I was led to believe in the love of one who sought me in such guise as you have done. Through kindness, gentle attention, friendship, and at last his seeming love, until he had won my love, and I had promised to be his wife as soon as my school-days were over.

"But, while I was yet new to my happiness, I heard—yes, I heard him tell a friend that he was only amusing himself flirting with the little aborigine; he couldn't afford to throw away his future by marrying a half-breed.

"Think of that, from lips that not twenty-four hours before had spoken to me the fondest words that can be spoken to woman!

"I was inside the seminary grounds, separated from the street by a thick evergreen hedge, and he was walking by with his friend. I stepped through the gate below, and met him face to face, before the words were cold on his lips. 'Liar and coward,' I called him, and never looked upon his face again.

"Do you think I forget, or that I need that lesson twice?"

"Poor child! my poor darling! but do you believe me capable of treachery like that?" I cried.

"I did not believe *him* capable of it," she answered, bitterly.

"But, Katherine, look at me—hear me! Can you not see that I am in earnest, that I love you truly, with the love of an honest man, and not under a hypocrite's mask? Has all our acquaintance given you no knowledge of my character, no faith in my word? Surely you need not punish me for the villainy of another! Deal with me by your own standard, my darling! for what I myself am, not for that for which I am blameless.

"Again I say to you, Katherine, I love you with all my heart, and care nothing for the barriers you would raise between us! Be my wife, and let the past take care of itself, while we make a happy future ours.

"Trust to my sincerity, my dearest, and let the coming years teach you how true I can be to my trust!

"You know how truly Dr. Gray has been your friend—and he has long known that I meant to win you for my wife if I could.

"Consult him, and see if he does not tell you that I seek you in all sincerity and honor, as the dearest thing that life can give me.

"Only say that you love me, and let me ask your mother to give her daughter into the keeping of one who will love and protect her forever!"

While I spoke, the red glow had faded from her cheeks, and now the slow tears were dripping one by one from her down-cast eyes.

"Forgive me!" she said, and her voice had never seemed so sweet, "I need not ask Dr. Gray—I believe you now."

But, as I clasped her hand and tried to draw her to my side, she said:

"No, it can make no difference with us, except that it has restored my faith in man, and left me free to remember you as the best and dearest friend of my life."

"And you do not love me—will not be

my wife? O Katherine! do you mean this?"

For an instant she hesitated, and then, even as she drew her hand from mine and stood slim and erect before me, her brave eyes met mine and she answered:

"No—I love you! but these are the words that must divide—not unite us! No blush for me shall ever stain your cheek. No one shall point with scorn to you as having a half-breed wife!"

"Katherine," I cried, "you are wrong! there could be no such thing!"

"Nay, I am right," she said. "Have I not seen it all—the covert sneer, the side-long look, the smile of contempt, when you have been seen beside me? Ah! I have borne all that I can bear! Cursed by my white blood, I will go back to my own people, as my father did!"

"What am I better than they? This dusky color in my skin, the nerve that has enabled me to bear the taunts and slights of my mother's race, aye, of my mother's own, these stamp me theirs! They will not scoff and scorn me! I will seek a refuge among them, and pray to die!"

"Farewell! seek me no more. Oh! my beloved—farewell!"

And with a passionate gesture of love and despair, she turned and fled as the deer flees.

Half stunned by the wild misery of her words, the suddenness of her flight, I could only stand and watch her disappear down the narrow path, until she was gone from sight.

But at evening I went to her home, determined to overcome her fears, and put her morbid fancies to an end.

Katherine was not there—nor was she ever there again.

The weeks came and went, and the months crept on, while I sought ceaselessly for my darling.

With faithful Pierre, who spoke the Indian tongue as he did his own, as my interpreter, we sought through many an

Indian camp for tidings of my lost one, but if any knew her whereabouts they guarded the secret well, for we got no tidings, neither hint nor clue.

And at last, mourning her as dead, I turned away despairing, and again sought my Eastern home.

Five years, six years, passed away. Business called me to the far West. Sitting in the camp of miners one evening, I suddenly heard the distant notes of a violin. Instantly I was on my feet.

"Oh! it is only a violin," my companion said, lazily, taking his pipe from his mouth and watching the smoke dissolve into air. "There's a camp of friendly Indians over there," motioning over his shoulder, "and they've got hold of a fiddle, somehow." And he rolled over on his elbow and refilled his pipe.

But I was away—my heart choking me with its throbs—my memory back among the drooping pines where I had taught that little air—my own—to Katherine! Ah! no hand but hers could put that quivering sadness into its tones!

Quickly approaching the spot from whence the music arose, I soon stood upon the borders of an evening camp.

The ruddy firelight shone from a great fire in the centre, around which clustered several groups of men, women, and children, while in the rear could be seen the tethered ponies cropping the grass in the open space of moonlight.

But near me, just where the moonlight touched the border of the forest, distinctly revealed, and standing almost in the exact attitude in which I had seen her first, stood Katherine!

Her scarlet blanket trailed behind her on the grass, the long silken braids hung below her slender waist; but the dainty, civilized dress was exchanged for one of deer-skin, bright with fringe of beads and colored needlework, and again the slender feet were moccasined.

Advancing quickly almost to her side, I softly spoke her name.

And again, as at first, our eyes met.

Katherine, indeed, but oh! how changed! The wan pallor of the wasted cheek, and the emaciated form, the unnatural brightness of the beautiful, melancholy eyes, looking so large in the pale, delicate face. All told alike the story of the end so surely drawing near.

As she saw me she pressed her hand against her heart, as if to still its beating, bent forward, and in a hushed tone called my name:

"Allan? Allan?"

"Yes, Katherine, it is Allan! And you? Oh! my darling!"

"Hush!" she whispered, as she stepped hastily to my side. "Since it is indeed you, and not the vision that has so often deceived me—listen, before you speak further!"

"Across the gulf that divides us more utterly than death—and because death, too, is very near—I may once more speak to you, may even thank God that I have looked upon your face once more!"

"Look!" pointing to the tall, solitary figure of a man, standing before the red glow of the firelight, "that is Antoine, my husband! An alien, like myself."

"Katherine!" I gasped.

"Yes, it is true! Maddened by the thought of all that I had borne, determined that you should not persuade me to take a step that meant pain and ruin to your life, I sought to place between us a barrier over which even my love could not return.

"Among the people of my race I buried myself—I tried to forget—to die! But death was long in coming at my call—ah! so long! But come with me!"

She caught my hand, and drew me a little farther away, where a small tent rose

in the shadow. Drawing aside the folds of the doorway, she motioned me to enter. The little room was light and warm. Many evidences of her old life and its delights were there amid the ruder surroundings of savage life, but my gaze centered on a pile of soft skins, on which lay a sleeping child.

"I have transmitted the curse!" she said, sadly, and bent and touched with light caress the sunny brow. The touch, light as it was, awoke him—Katherine's boy!

How like he was! Fair, delicate, with his mother's silken curls, and dark, pathetic eyes.

A keen pang cut me to the heart. I could not bear it.

I turned away. One more look at the dear eyes of my poor misguided one, lost forever—at the hectic spots burning on her cheeks, joyful banners proclaiming her speedy release—one touch of the little burning hand—she drew the folds of her blanket over her face, and I went out into the shadows alone.

Gray hairs are thick among my locks to-day; my fair wife, Violet, calm and gracious, sits beside my hearth, our fair-faced children playing at her knee.

Quiet and cold the tide of daily life flows on.

But sometimes, at night, beside my lonely desk, I seem to hear the sighing of the forest-winds, to smell the fragrance of the pines, to feel the hot throb of youthful passion in my veins; and then I wonder if, beyond that silent forest-grave far away beneath the Western skies, there is not some land where I shall meet once more my first love with her dusky eyes, and find a compensation for life's pain.

S. P. SMITH.

THE CURSE OF TRACADIE.

BY

MARIAN C. L. REEVES.

Author of "A Little Maid of Acadie," "Old Martin Boscawen's Jest," "Pilot Fortune," etc.

CHAPTER II.

"There was a listening fear in her regard,
As if calamity had but begun;
As if the vanward clouds of evil days
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear
Was with its stored thunder laboring up."

"VIRGINE—"

The girl lifts her head in a listening attitude. Her eyes, still unaccustomed to the darkness out-of-doors, but dimly make out the figure crossing the road to her.

But she knows the voice, and the strong clasp of the hands upon her arms still resting folded on the top-rail of the fence.

Knowing the clasp, it may seem strange—at least to Niel Macniel—that she should withdraw herself from it so precipitately.

"Have I frightened you, Virgine? Did you not know me—Niel?" he asked her, soothingly.

He sees her glance over her shoulder, as if she would fain follow that stream of lamplight into the house.

But he misinterprets her gesture.

"Why should you shrink from being seen with me, Virgine?" he says, proudly.

"We are no children; we have the right to choose for ourselves. Why should we not go in yonder to the old people, hand in hand, and tell them that we *have* chosen; that we love one another; that we are going to be married—"

"Because we are *not* going to be married."

She breaks in on him so suddenly, with

that sharp defiance in her tone, that for an instant he is too startled to answer her.

His hands fall from their hold on her.

He says, after a pause:

"You have told them, then? They have persuaded you to give me up?"

"I have told them nothing. There is nothing to tell them. Only, we are friends."

"Friends!"

He throws back his head with a scornful laugh. And with the movement his eyes catch the glimmer of lights from Doncet's house among the distant trees.

He takes Virgine suddenly by the shoulders, more firmly than gently, and turns her round to look also.

"Do you see it, Virgine? Is it *that*, that has thrown more light on this affair of yours and mine? Old Doncet has much money to buy many things; is he able to buy you?"

His jealousy overmasters him. She is so fair as she stands there with the light falling about her; she ought to have everything that gold could lavish on her. And old Doncet has so much, and he, Niel, has nothing.

Not an hour ago, in the village, he heard this Doncet match gossiped about as certain to take place, and a very good thing for the girl, too! And he had dashed away, out of earshot of those evil tongues, and had groped his way here in the dark, just to watch the light in her window; to see her for a moment, to give his doubts and fears the lie. And now she is confirming them!

"Let me go, then!" she cries, panting in his grasp. "I—you will not make it harder for me?"

"Make it harder for you?"

"To part. Why should we part? If we could still be friends—nothing but friends—"

"That we can never be. Lovers—enemies: which you will, Virgine?"

He has let go his grasp of her: leaving her free to choose.

How can she make a choice so cruel? Is there no middle ground? For her part she could be his friend all her life long: seeing him sometimes, if only passing on the beach or in the village, living on a trusting word, a tender glance.

But is *that* friendship? The overpowering blush that rushes in a hot flood to her forehead, answers her.

It is too dark for him to see a blush; and in an instant she has gained the mastery over herself.

They must part, indeed. But she will make it as easy for him as she can.

"Niel—"

At the soft voice, he loses self-control.

"Virgine, for Heaven's sake, do not play fast and loose with me! If you love me—"

"If I love you?" still in the same soft voice.

"If you tell me so, Virgine, then I will never give you up."

"Not if you must?"

"There is no 'must' in such a case!"

There is a ring of triumph in his tone, as if she had already given him the right to hold her fast.

She leans her elbows on the fence between them, propping her chin in her two hands, lifting her face to him. Her back is to the light, the light from the house is in his face. It is a little rugged and weatherbeaten; but she thinks as she looks up, that there is none in the world so handsome and so noble.

And eager and glad. How will her words change it? For she says, steadily:

"Not lovers. Friends—enemies: which you will," repeating his own words.

"Only, never lovers. See, I swear it, Niel Macniel: never lovers, I call Heaven to witness, while this same blood of mine beats in these veins!"

She holds up her hand, in the light: the hand unmarked by leprosy, although the fell disease must yet be throbbing in her veins. But she cannot tell Niel that. She will not bear to see him shrink from her touch.

He has not shrunk from her touch yet. He has taken her face in his two hands.

"So fair, so false," is what he says. And then suddenly he is pressing down his kisses on lips, cheek, and brow.

The next instant he has pushed her from him, almost fiercely.

"Go to your old lover," he says. "Tell him you loved me first—me first—with such a pitiful thing as your love is!"

She has staggered back: the fence between them. She half stretches out her hands, then lets them fall, and turns, and that same moment has crept back into the house.

Better so. It will be easier for him to give her up, she tells herself, if he believes her worthless.

She creeps into the house; she is stealing up to her own little nest of a room under the eaves when she meets Madame Painchand.

"See, little one—"

The girl pauses, with one foot on the ladder-like stair.

"Do not stop me, grand'mère. The stone is thrown—it is all over," she says, a little wildly. And then, putting a constraint upon herself to have the whole thing over at once: "Grand'mère, I shall take M. Landry's offer of a place in his shop at St. John. I shall go to Summerside for the next steamer. I cannot stay here: you will not ask me, grand'mère."

She leaves no space for the asking, but flits up the stair breathlessly, just as Mac-

niel has gathered himself together and turned his back on the false light that lured him up here.

One moment he stands still, feeling his cheek wet with the tears that drenched Virgine's.

But the next instant he, too, has turned sharply away.

For the rain is drizzling in his face, with the mocking of tears.

He laughs hoarsely, derisively, pulling out his handkerchief, and brushing the drops roughly away.

"That ever a mere gust of rain should have tricked me into half believing in her! Well, I cannot stay here. I'll not wait for any one captain or crew. I'm off for Charlottetown to-morrow, to ship on any vessel setting sail at once. And so—"

He breaks off, for the wind just then snatches his handkerchief away, like an invisible hand stretched out for it through the fence. He stands looking after the white fluttering thing through the dark. Let it go. It was Virgine's gift: embroidered with his name in full and presented on his saint's-day: for the girl had managed to find a patron-saint for this staunch descendant of the Scottish Covenanters.

It flutters now like a thing alive, out in the stormy dark. Niel has to put some constraint upon himself, to turn on his heel and stride away, down the hillside. He laughs harshly at his own conceit, as he forces himself to hurry on. He has worn it on his heart, that bit of senseless linen from the patch of flax which Virgine raised and spun and wove; and he has a feeling as of one shutting out into the storm a dove with a message under its white wing.

Virgine, kneeling at her tiny window, far on into the night, sees the flutter once or twice, but does not give a thought to it.

She sees one thing, however, to which she does give some wondering thought.

It must be far on into the night. The girl had flung herself on her bed, weary

and longing for sleep, and perhaps did fall into a dreamful, troubled doze.

For it must be a dream, that horror of great darkness; that sense of sinking, sinking into the cold sea; those cries of mortal terror filling her ears.

When she raises herself upon her elbow, listening, it is only the raging of the waves against the cliff, and the sighing of the wind among the hillside firs.

But what a wild night it is, and what a fierce and angry sea! The girl slips away to the window and kneels there, gazing out into the empty dark, with a heart full of wordless prayer for the fishermen at sea.

She has no one at sea, the saints be praised! but old Barbeau down in the village has; and Marie Violette's lover is out; and—

What is that?—a light flashing up and down, below there, like the lantern of a ship riding at anchor!

No ship can ride at anchor there. Even the light-draught fishing vessels must give the place a wide berth, so full is it of dangerous eddies and great jagged fangs of rocks and whirling pools.

There is a bit of beach bordering it, which in the day-time Virgine can catch a glimpse of, from her window, because of a sharp rift in the cliff which comes in line with the window. It is the only look-out she knows, from which that patch of crumbled red sandstone beach is visible; and though she cannot see it in this darkness, she is sure from the position that the light must be off Red-Beach. How the vessel must be tossed to and fro, up and down, with the motion of that light! How dangerous.

Suddenly, the light is gone.

She brushes her hand over her eyes, and looks again.

But the light is gone, indeed.

At first she is horror-stricken, as if she had seen the ship sucked down into those pools, under her very gaze.

And then she breathes a deep sigh of

relief for the thought that has come to her: that the vessel was farther off than she had believed; and she sees it no more simply because it has sailed out of sight, beyond the rift in the cliff, and safely past Red-Beach.

For all this comfortable conviction, she has been too terrified to calm down all at once to sleep. She is still kneeling in her window, at that coldest and most sullen hour of the night, when it begins to give way reluctantly to dawn.

She is just raising herself, with a little shiver, to creep back to bed: when yonder is the flickering light again.

Not down under the cliff: but here, close to the house; inside the fence now.

There are no midnight marauders in the tiny Acadian fishing-village, nor about it, as there is little to tempt any such. But Virgine has watched so long in the storm to-night, with her own wretched thoughts pressing upon her, that she is full of superstitious fears. She might have cried aloud: but that at this instant the man stoops, and the lantern flares full on him.

He stoops, and picks up something white and soaked from the wet sod of the garden-patch.

It is Niel's handkerchief.

But Virgine does not know that: any more than does old Painchand guess the use he will one day put it to, now when he mechanically thrust it into his breast, at the sound of a window opening above.

"Is anything the matter, grandpère?" she calls softly, not to awaken the grandmother, who is snoring peacefully in the room below.

The old man starts violently, almost letting fall the lantern, and hurriedly turning its dark side.

But he knows he is too late; and so he says, as softly:

"Nothing at all, my child. Only I thought I heard the cow loose in the barn; and went to see. Go back to bed, and don't wake the grand'mère."

Virgine obeys, smiling a little bitterly to herself, as she hides her face on the pillow. That is the way with the grandfather: one never gets a direct, straightforward answer, such as Grand'mère Painchand gives. The poor old man! no doubt if Grand'mère Painchand told him of her disclosure to her, Virgine, he could not rest for the thoughts of the past, and its terrible doom of leprosy upon his children and his children's children. He had taken his lantern, and gone wandering up and down that beach, facing the New Brunswick shores, far up which opens Baie du Vin, where the first seeds of leprosy were cast from a wrecked ship, in the last century.

This is the interpretation Virgine puts upon all she has heard and seen this night.

She never doubts this interpretation, even when, the next morning, she renews her proposal to close at once with M. Landry's offer, and to set out for St. John without delay. Madame Painchand hesitates, but Painchand himself betrays a suppressed eagerness to get rid of the girl.

"*Sang du jeoble!*" he says, apart to the old woman: "it is to put fire to powder, to have her about the place. And she'll never take herself over to Doncet's, that speaks all alone, as clear as day. Let her go, Domitilde, *mon choux*: the sooner, the safer. She is one who sees to the bottom of the sack, with those great, wondering eyes of hers. I tell you, it is not safe: she is malign, she is *reelle mauvaise*."

CHAPTER III.

"Some wisdom may declare
That womanhood is proved the best
By golden brooch and glossy vest
The mincing ladies wear:
Yet is it proved, and was of old,
Anear as well, I dare to hold,
By truth, or by despair."

THE blue water is all vanished: Prince Edward Island, as one looks across North-

umberland Strait from its narrowest point, at Cape Tormentine on the New Brunswick coast, is hardly an island now. Great drifts and hummocks of ice close the sea-passage, swaying hither and thither with the tides, and in reality isolating the province from the mainland far more completely than the roughest seas could do.

At this narrowest point, where the red shores, white-coated now, rise, hardly a dozen miles across the strait, a group is gathered round the mail-boat, on this winter morning.

A group of mail-carriers, strong and bold, as they have need to be, for the winter service has need of such men.

Last spring, the staunch steamer "Northern Light," in making the short passage across from the mainland, was caught in the ice-floes and carried backward and forward in sight of land, but literally cut off from it for three long, cold, and starving weeks, until this Arctic voyage ended at last in her port.

The mails to-day are not to be trusted to the great, helpless steamer. On the frozen border of the sea, against the background of the snowy firwood, these men stand about a staunch open boat that will glide over the ice-fields on its runners like a skater, or take to the water in the open gaps like a sea-fowl.

There seem to be few passengers to-day. Only a lad in a heavy blanket ulster almost down to the heels of his waterproof boots, and a hat drawn very much down on his short, curling hair, and a man.

"Niel Macniel!" One of the carriers claps him familiarly on the shoulder, then draws back suddenly, as if he had made some mistake.

Niel Macniel looks at him from head to foot, with a grim smile.

"The same, my man. Only, you forgot, for a moment, that you didn't care to be hail-fellow-well-met with a wrecker, a robber, a murderer, perhaps? You forgot—"

The man has plucked him by the sleeve, warningly.

"Take care, Macniel! A reward is offered for you, as I understand, I—I ought not to warn you. But, confound it, man, you saved my boy from breaking his neck over the cliffs last spring. I can't let you go blindly ahead, and risk—" He touches his own neck significantly.

Niel smiles grimly again.

"You're very good: but what do you suppose I'm coming back to Prince Edward for, but just to give myself up, to clear the matter up? For there must be some way to clear the matter up, for an innocent man. I was as far away as the States, when I saw in the papers all this bosh about my handkerchief being found in a hole in the rocks, down on Red-Beach, hidden away with the lantern I must have used to lure the ship ashore."

"Yes, it was all in the papers; even in the Halifax and St. John papers," his friend says, with a touch of unconscious pride in such celebrity.

The lad behind them, leaning against the gunwale of the boat, shivers from head to foot, and turns an abrupt shoulder on the speakers, as if not caring to listen.

"To lure the ship ashore—in the storm, the very night before I sailed from Charlottetown! It all sounds suspicious enough, and I see it is supposed I scurried off with my spoils. But I'm not afraid of a lie; and—eh, what is it? We are getting under way?"

The lad has slipped round to the other side of the boat, half hidden in the knot of men.

One of them is saying, with a laugh, as he falls in line, with his grip on the gunwale:

"It's well we don't have to take women passengers. There came a slip of a girl last time, and begged and prayed us, on her bended knees a'most—it was that pitiful! But we had to send her back, poor soul, to wait for the 'Northern Light,' whenever that may make the trip. I'm thinking it'll be a while first, with all this ice."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AMONG THE LAVENDER.

CHAPTER I.

"I TOLD you so," said my friend, Jack Carlyon, looking across at me with that peculiarly aggravating expression of countenance that always accompanies the utterance of the above sentence.

I was out of sorts, and easily irritated.

"If you did, it doesn't make it any the better, or the pleasanter," I answered. "I could better have afforded to take a spell of the entire and complete rest this fool prates about at any other time than just now."

"I never knew a fellow that didn't say that when he'd got his back into a job, and had to give it up for a bit—don't you know?" said Jack, curling up one corner of his tawny mustache with his strong, lithe fingers, and looking the personification of perfect health and manly strength; while I—

Well, well, it was all very well for me to call Dr. Marchmont a fool. It let the steam off, somehow, but a long array of sleepless nights, backed up by an army of lesser symptoms, which my own medical knowledge told me spelt the words "overworked," convinced me that his kindly and urgent counsel was true, and that few men in London stood in greater need of a spell of rest and recruiting than Stephen Allardyce—meaning myself.

When you get to "overworked," the next station on the journey is "broken-down." I did not wish to attain to this last. I resolved to leave London; bury myself among green fields, apple-orchards,

and haystacks; and give myself up entirely to the conjugation of the verb, "to lazy." Not a manuscript will I look at, much less write; not a proof will I correct. All my intellectual faculties shall lie fallow for this needful space of rest. My thinking powers are my stock-in-trade; I must needs husband them.

The problem how best to attain to this perfection of rural happiness and idleness faced me pitilessly.

Country lodgings? Bah! Bad cookery, ill-ventilated rooms, long-legged spiders on the bread-and-butter. Perish the thought. A country hotel? Worse still. Yokels keeping festival on Saturday nights; a mingled smell of tepid beer and stable-yard pervading everything. The very thought was irritating, and I opened my morning paper with an unamiable jerk.

Ill-temper ought not, one would think, to be rewarded. Mine was.

An advertisement stared me in the face; a message that might almost seem to have been sent straight from Heaven.

"Address: M. R., Orchard Farm, near Wortlebury. A single gentleman can have the use of two airy rooms and attendance. Terms moderate. Good fishing."

Now I love fishing. I look upon it as a delicious phase of idleness.

Half my days swinging in a hammock underneath the chequered shadow of the apple-boughs, with no companion save pipe or cigarette as the mood dictates, the other half lounging on a river's brink,

crushing the forget-me-nots and the golden king-cups, and watching my rod—not eagerly, only lazily—for the bite which may come or not, as it pleases. A month of such a life as this, and I should become vulgarly robust; I should sleep like one of the Seven Sleepers, and relish the plainest food like a plowboy. But then, the plain food must be well cooked and cleanly served. Therein lies the difference between my possibilities and the plowboy's.

I was, however, of a mind to think the food would be well-dressed, and cleanly—nay, perhaps, daintily served. For I wrote to M. R., and M. R. replied; and her letter was the letter of a gentlewoman.

Orchard Farm! How delightfully suggestive a name! Doubtless, apple-trees there grow in a juxtaposition exactly fitted for the needs of that hammock in which I am to swing beneath earth and sky, I thought to myself; doubtless the grass is deliciously green; the apples nestling on the boughs deliciously pink on one plump cheek; and the thrushes laugh softly, as, with eager beak, they test the juices of the ripening plum. This last idea is perhaps hardly correct from the farmer's point of view, and might offend M. R.'s thrifty soul; but I love the sound of the thrush's gurgling laugh, so let it stand, even at the sacrifice of a plum or two.

"Don't you get scribbling, now," said Jack Carlyon, as he took leave of me on the Paddington platform. "You've overdone it, you know; and I tell you what it is, you'll break down, you know, if you don't look out."

Like a bird that sings the same few notes over and over again, Jack has piped the same tune to me persistently for some while back. It is a most unpleasant thing to be told the same thing over and over again. It is ever so much worse when the thing is true. I almost hated Jack as the train crawled out of the station and then set its mind to going in

earnest and puffed away into the open country.

And, to say the truth, this drifting away was welcome enough to me. In spite of all my asseverations to Jack Carlyon, I was conscious of many symptoms that, being interpreted, meant "worn out." I knew that a life without proof-sheets was, for a time, a necessity; and yet, like every true slave of the pen, I hug my chain, and love to linger lovingly in the company of my own creations.

Yet, must I change the rustle of "first proofs" and "revises" for the rustle of woodland whispers above my head. I must lay the busy pen aside, and let it speak no more for awhile.

It is a far cry from bustling Paddington to the sheltered nook in the Midlands where Orchard Farm is to be found; and, what with delays in catching trains on side-lines, and such-like tiresome incidents of travel, dusk had almost grown to night before I reached my temporary home. The sky had become overcast, and a fine drizzle was falling as I alighted from a ramshackle kind of vehicle which the driver called a gig—but which struck me as bearing considerably more resemblance to a worn-out tax-cart—at the gate of Orchard Farm.

I could see the misty outlines of close-growing trees; and amid them shone the gleam of a light here and there, while the patch of radiance cast by an uncurtained lattice lay almost across my pathway.

Through the faint mist of rain came sweet scents innumerable, sweet brier, roses, jasmine, all giving out their sweet breath unstintingly, and over all, and dominating all, the old familiar perfume of "sweet lavender." I say "familiar," because—so subtle is the association of a perfume—it took me back at once to the memory of my boyhood in my "mind's eye." I saw the little white-curtained room that welcomed me home from school as each holiday came round; the little room where my mother's touch seemed to linger every-

where, most of all in the scent of the lavender that came from tiny muslin bags, in which the purple spears were prisoned.

Thus the lavender set me thinking of a long-dead past; but all this was after a hearty and thoroughly countrified supper, at which a neat-handed, round-faced girl waited upon me, and with a quaint little "dip" of a courtesy, asked me "when I would be pleased to take my breakfast," and "the mistress said, would I have a bowl of milk, warm from the cow, sent up at seven, like the last gentleman who was at the farm?"

There was a certain ready sympathy in the girl's look and tone that convinced me that Orchard Farm was a sort of perpetual sanatorium; and that broken-down creatures of various kinds were in the habit of finding an asylum there, and being resuscitated with bowls of new milk and other country comforts. I even felt intuitively that a person in a state of rude health would hardly be acceptable to the inhabitants of this Midland homestead, where all sweet perfumes mingled so deliciously, and where the question how the lodger might be "getting on," was doubtless an interesting part of the day's routine.

The sense of deep restfulness was on me like a cool hand laid caressingly upon a fevered brow. Those long, weary hours of wakefulness which had beset me for many a week past—hours, each one worse and more weary than the last—seemed as a dream that is past.

The fine rain had ceased to fall; soft fleecy clouds moved gently across the sky, and a concord of sweet sounds rose from the deep bosom of the woods.

The nightingales were mad beneath the moon,
And with strange ecstasy of gurgling song,
Made night all jubilant. * * *

"Now," thought I to myself, as I struck a match, and lighted my pipe, "did I ever hear nightingales before?"

Perhaps. But surely I had never been in so receptive a humor—never so attuned to the harmony of their exquisite clamor.

Seated at the open window, peacefully smoking, contentedly musing, I became conscious of the fact that the woodland choristers sang to an accompaniment—a low, monotonous deep note.

"It is the river," thought I, delightedly. "I must ask M. R. to-morrow about the fishing."

London, with all its whirr and stir; my editor's sanctum; the stairs that led thereto, by no means a Jacob's ladder; long, interminable slips of proofs; impatient printer's devils beating the devil's tattoo upon my door; all these things faded away like so many dissolving views. In a couple of hours I had become a complete rustic; my highest ambition was to catch fish in the river that was singing somewhere there among the woods and fields, bring them home in a creel, and get my rosy-faced Phyllis to broil them for my tea. An humble aspiration, truly, but one which to any tired and overwrought brain, seems to hold the gift of rest and healing.

To "turn in" at half-past ten, instead of sitting up in company with the creations of one's own brain till far into the small hours, was a novelty, and seemed like a tempting of Providence in the matter of sleep. But no! Haunted by the perfume of sweet lavender, and looking dreamily forward to the bowl of milk, warm from the cow, I quickly fell asleep, my last conscious thought running thus: "Now 'the mistress' must be M. R." So I fell into the poppy valley of a dreamless night—a luxury, to me, new indeed.

CHAPTER II.

It is said that cats track the young and unsuspecting thrush by the sweetness of its song—fancy dining, with an appetite, on so much murdered music!—and with

like subtlety did I stalk the river that lay far away among the trees. Led by the low crooning of its sweet, monotonous chant, I took my way over the fields, in the first fresh hour of the morning. I was as a "giant refreshed." I seemed to have grown young in a night—a night of deep, unbroken slumber such as had not visited my eyes for many a long and weary week. "Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care." Oh! master-mind that "so read human nature like a book, and told its story to a listening world;" for surely no other expression of which language is capable could so express the renewal of the drooping energies, the restoration of the flaccid nerves, as those two happily chosen words, "knit up." Stepping briskly over the dew-laden, flower-pied grass, toward where, in the deep heart of the wood, the river called to me with crooning voice, a sylvan Lorelei—thus ran my thoughts. The day was still a very young day, and the level sun-rays seemed just to tip the grass and flowers, and pierce through the holes of the thick-eried trees, and touch the ripples of the river to a smile.

How delicious the plunge beneath that sun-lit water; how like a river-god one felt, and then the pleasant return after the bath was done! The sense of invigoration in every vein, as swinging my towel in my hand, and with hat set well back on my head, in a fashion that would have led New Bond Street to look upon me as an escaped lunatic, I betook myself once more toward Orchard Farm.

I was fated to see two idyls—both equally beautiful in their way—on that return journey of mine. First, just at the turn of the lane, against the background formed by a bank all ablaze with golden buttercups, two starlings engaged in furious conflict. I stood still to watch the battle. What shrill cries of rage, what quick darting of beaks, what mad whirl of wings! And all the time the glorious prisms of the two swelling throats

gleaming and flashing and glancing in the sunlight with every tint and glowing color—now richest purple, now shining gold, now a wondrous, metallic-green! Truly, a conflict of rainbows.

A few paces further brought me in view of another idyl, and this time a picture never to be effaced from my memory.

Many a year has now gone by since my summer trip to Orchard Farm, but every line, every shade of that picture is as clear in my mind at this moment as when first my eyes lighted upon it.

A man, young, good to look upon, slender in form, and with a strange, eager look upon his face, sat upon a low bench, near which grew, tall and straight, a perfect forest of lavender bushes, softly purpled with a thousand spear-like blossoms. In this eager face, turned upward toward me, yet utterly unobservant of me, as I felt instinctively, what I noticed most were the eyes, dark, bright, beautiful—but blind. It was easy to see that by their lack of all expression—indeed, the attitude of the man's whole figure told the same piteous tale. The thought struck me like a blow. Younger, by some years, than myself, sitting there in the balmy sunshine, with the fairest of nature's pictures stretched out before him, and yet seeing nothing. Scenting the wild flowers' sweet air; feeling the warmth of the rays that touched the world and bade it live and blossom and pulsate; but living in a void of perpetual darkness. Standing there, bareheaded to the summer light, my hat swinging in my hand, my whole being strengthened and refreshed by the plunge into the sun-bright river, my very soul gladdened by the beauty of earth and sky around me, this man's isolation seemed a thing to shudder at—as though in the midst of exquisite verdure and flower-decked meadows, one should stumble upon a corpse.

Yet in the moment in which these thoughts, lightning-swift, darted through

my mind, I realized also that that darkened life had its sun and light—the sun of a perfect love; the light of an exquisite sympathy. For, standing beside the blind man—leaning a little toward him, as if swayed unconsciously by an impulse of tenderness, one hand toying with the spears of lavender that sprang back elastic from her touch, the other resting on the shoulder of his old brown velveteen shooting-coat—was a woman, tall, slender, yet some way past the freshness of youth; sad-eyed, sad-faced, indeed, in strange enough contrast to the cheerful sweetness of her voice. All the lines of her figure were modeled with a perfect grace that must, I thought, make every movement like music. Her hair, rippling crisply above her thoughtful brow, was touched with silver in broad lights, like the light that edged the ripples of the river where the tree shadows were broken overhead. And there were lines in her face that told of pain and watchfulness in the past—at least, I fancied so—taking everything in at a glance, as it were, and dazed with that strange, unaccountable feeling of having gone through exactly the same thing before, which most of us have experienced at one time or other, and of which no acceptable explanation has ever been offered by mortal man.

Just as I stepped up the slow incline of the grass-grown road, which led to the garden gate, the man turned slightly toward his companion, laying his hand upon her arm.

"Margaret," he said, "show it to me. I can feel that it is beautiful."

I was close at the gate, but a charming gesture stopped me, a slight imperious movement of the fair, shapely hand, a look from the gentle eyes, that seemed to take me into her confidence at once.

"He must be humored. Stay a moment," that was what the look said.

I stood still, bareheaded. I was careful not to let the latch click.

She had two listeners instead of one—that was all.

There is nothing particularly novel in the expression, "word-painting." Every slave of the pen hears it often enough—often hears it used derisively. Nevertheless, word-painting is an art. It aims at bringing before the "mind's eye" in vivid and realistic colors that which the actual eye cannot see; and never had I realized to what perfection the art might be carried, until I stood before the gate of Orchard Farm in the early summer sunshine and listened to M. R.—for I was sure of her identity from the first—painting the morning landscape in its brightness and its beauty.

Nor did the story lose in the telling by the voice in which it was told. Sweet, low, yet full, were the accents that came to me across the lavender blossoms; all that Shakespeare himself could have wished for in woman. The man's dark, sightless orbs were meanwhile turned upon the speaker, so that, relieved against the gray of her simple gown, I could note the finely cut profile; the clustering, crested hair; the sweeping mustache beneath which, somehow, one recognized the sweetness and pathos of the mouth.

If this was my landlord, then I knew that I stood in the presence of an equal. If the woman by his side was M. R., then I knew that I had rightly divined her to be a gentlewoman—in every best sense and meaning of which that significant old-fashioned word is capable.

"Malcolm," she said, "this is our new lodger—Mr. Allardyce."

He rose from his place and stood there facing me in the sunshine—a strange, pathetic figure, blighted and blasted in the very noon-tide and hey-day of his manhood.

His hand, long, fine, pallid with the enforced inaction to which his affliction bound him, was stretched out toward me, and I, acting on an impulse as irre-

sistible as prompt, met and grasped it with mine.

"We are glad to see you," he said. "You have a lovely day for your first amongst us."

"We are glad to see you!" The words struck me strangely.

"She is there, 'the very eyes of him,'" I thought. "Through her he sees the world."

As I turned to his companion and shook hands with her in turn, I met her sad, sweet, grateful look, which in a moment struck a chord of sympathy between us; a chord that never in the future knew a note of discord. Now that I was nearer to "Margaret"—I knew her by no more definite name so far—I saw that she was a much older woman than I had at first sight supposed, but had preserved the essence of youthfulness by some subtle power within herself. Later on I learnt that this power was the intensity of love with which she had merged her own personality in that of another—the husband to whom she was light, life, everything. We three moved on toward the house, where through the open window my breakfast showed temptingly; M. R. toying with a bundle of lavender spears that she had gathered and set in her waist-belt. Under her touch they gave out more generously their pungent perfume; and so, forever and ever, this holiday jaunt of mine came to be thought of and remembered by me as "Among the Lavender."

"Considering my blindness, I can distinguish where people are pretty well," said he of the old shooting-coat. "You see I found out your whereabouts by the sound of your steps, even on the grass."

This outspoken reference to his condition surprised me. I, whose work in life is to write fluently, and therefore ought to be, to some extent, at all events, ready of speech, was dumb!

The whole thing seemed so bad, and had come upon me so unexpectedly.

"Mr. Ruthven rather prides himself

upon his achievements, you see," said M. R., whom I now knew for Mrs. Ruthven, and she smiled; but I have seen tears less sad. I think she saw my trouble, and, recognizing that it was for her husband's sake, accepted it as a pleasant gift. At least that was what her eyes seemed to flash to mine across those sightless ones. But what she said was this:

"You will like to know about the fishing, will you not?"

I assented; and then with a grave bow, she led her blind husband into a room on the other side of the passage to mine.

Seated at my solitary breakfast-table, I was more ready to ponder on what I had heard and seen, than to eat.

There was so much pathos to me in that old shooting-coat! It was a shooting-coat. No man who loves his gun can mistake a garment of that kind. So it had not been so very long since that this man Ruthven—some years younger than myself, as I have said, even now—had been hale and strong, and able to follow manly sports and pastimes. Perhaps he loved the touch of the old brown-ribbed velveteen, because it called to his mind those days of light and liberty.

On his hand I had noticed a ring, a plainly set deep-red cornelian, and a strange fancy took me—born, no doubt, of my story-weaving trade—that it was like a drop of his very heart's blood, shed like a tear distilled by bitterest pain. I am sure the rosy-faced maid who brought in my rasher and toast thought I was a very bad case indeed, and should need whole gallons of milk "warm from the cow," before I began to "look up," like the other interesting lodgers at Orchard Farm had done!

Later in the day I found that in the quaint, old-world garden which appertained to Mr. and Mrs. Ruthven's abode, were two apple-trees, and betwixt their gnarled boles, a hammock, swaying gently in the gentle breeze. Extended in this sylvan nest, I watched my cigarette smoke

steal up among the branches; counted the apples just beginning to grow rosy on one round cheek; listened to the hum of the bees in the tall hollyhocks hard by; struggled to discipline my thoughts, so that they should not go straying after "making copy" out of my surroundings—which, however, it is to be seen now they did—and finally sent myself off to sleep with my own castle-building.

The sudden laugh and chuckle of a thrush in a cherry-tree, just behind my head, woke me, and for a moment I was puzzled to know my own whereabouts, and why, on awakening from slumber, I had such a very prominent view of my own crimson socks and low shoes, and why I felt as if I had been trying to stand on my head in my sleep.

Orchard Farm, a white hand with a blood stone ring, the ripple of the river—all these things crowded into my mind, jostling one another. Next came the thought: "How loud the bees hum in the country!" But surely it was one gigantic bee I heard monotonously crooning, or a whole hive, or a human voice, "soft and low," reading aloud.

I was up and out of my eerie in a moment, and with but small politeness, it must be admitted, had made my way to a wide, low, open window, or rather casement, set back on its hasp, so that prying roses peeped into the room beyond.

And what was there was truly well worth the seeing. Malcolm Ruthven—I cannot speak of him by any more formal name, he has now been held so long in my memory as simply Malcolm Ruthven—sat, or rather lay back in a low, lounging chair, his hands folded above his shapely head, the blood-red ring showing against the white interlaced fingers. Close beside him sat his wife. The concentrated light from the casement glittered on the white-braided of her hair. I had not thought it was so gray before. Her dark, pathetic brows were slightly knit as she read; read, as she had "word-painted" the birth

of the day for the eyes that could not see; read as one is seldom privileged to hear any one read. The great, low window was open widely. I could not lurk unseen. I saw the blind man stir uneasily; my step already had betrayed me. I grew bold, impudent, brazen-faced.

I seated myself on the broad stone ledge of the casement.

"Mrs. Ruthven, may I listen, too?"

She looked up and smiled through the sheen of tears that brightened her eyes.

"Margaret will not mind having two listeners instead of one," said her husband, speaking for her.

So she read, while he and I listened, the story of the "old, old fashion, death"—the story of the death of Paul Dombey.

But the scent of the lavender was everywhere, and the sweet bird-voices twittered in the leafy cover; and these, with the blue, cloudless dome above, and Heaven's blest sunshine over all, spoke, even to my world-hardened heart, of "that older fashion yet of immortality!"

CHAPTER III.

I WAS never at any hour of my life the very least in love with Margaret Ruthven. Love is assuredly a mighty power in life; but it is not the only mighty influence in life, as some people seem to think; not the only emotion of the human heart that is the motive-power in many a drama, full to the brim of pathos, of joy and pain, and afterward of sweet remembrance. Had I never known Malcolm and Margaret Ruthven, I should never have become the man I have grown to be since. Those days at Orchard Farm were the making of me. The higher side of my nature widened and developed; the lower, self-loving half of me dwindled. I began to think of my work differently. Neither reputation as a writer, nor yet gain in pocket, appeared any more as an object worth striving for, except subordinately. I wanted my work to be smitten through

and through with deeper truth, so as to touch and hold the hearts of men.

I had never before enjoyed the close companionship of a really cultured woman. Pretty women, clever women, good women, women who were not good—all these I had encountered in the past, and fallen more or less under the charm of this one or that. But I had never known of what tender, many-sided beauty the mind of a woman is capable—a woman chastened of sorrow, taught of Heaven, supreme in the power of a ready and perfect sympathy.

Margaret Ruthven was all these things and more, and yet so utterly without self-consciousness that one could often trace in her a gentle surprise at the weight of her own words. The way in which the beautiful, sightless face of her husband turned to her, followed her with a blind instinct of her whereabouts, the smile that dawned round his mouth, lighting up his whole being, as it were, at the sound of her footsteps—the ways in which she was eyes to him, hands to him, feet to him—

It all remains with me, lingers about me like the memory of sweet music—like some grand psalm, known by heart, of which the last line should run: "Love stronger than death."

And I always think of Margaret Ruthven as "among the lavender," as if the mingled sweetness and unpretentiousness of the flower made her truest emblem. Even now, years after that visit to the quiet Midland nook beside the river, if I come suddenly upon a grove of blue-gray spear-like blossoms rising from blue-green leaves, I think of Orchard Farm, the fine, still rain falling in the warm summer's night and bringing out the perfume of the flowers beneath its gentle dews; or the stately form of Margaret standing at the gateway, by the great lavender bush, with the gray-blue blossoms at her belt.

It was not an easy task to make those two—husband and wife—speak of themselves. Of nature, in every aspect; of

art; of books—those best companions—on all such topics both were fluent. Mrs. Ruthven would read aloud by the hour. The great minds that have given their great store of thoughts to men kept company with us day by day. But of the individual lives and experience of my host and hostess I learnt little, until, indeed, the last evening of my holiday.

A sadness was over us all; on me, perhaps, it lay the deepest. They always had each other; I had only companied with them a little while in their fair land of Beulah. I must go out into the turmoil and strife once more. To add to the depression, of which we were evidently all the victims, Malcolm Ruthven was in suffering—had been hardly able to bear a touch of light upon his eyes all day; had so suffered, that even the sound of the beloved voice reading to him would have been too much.

"Take my wife out for an hour's walk down by the river! She sorrows over me too much when I am like this; more than is good for her. Cheer her up for me, there's a good fellow."

By which speech it will be seen that our intimacy had ripened at a fine pace during the three weeks of my holiday, and that we understood each other very thoroughly.

An hour later we set off—pale, tired, anxious Margaret, and her lodger.

Her husband's words had struck me not a little:

"When I am like this—"

He was, then, often like that, often in pain, in weariness; forced to abide in the darkness that could alone heal. With these thoughts in my heart, I paced slowly along in silence by the side of the woman whose simple gray bonnet framed her white patient face, as the calyx frames the flower; and then—I hardly know how, but all at once—as the result, I imagine, of some impulsive, hot words of sympathy on my part, we seemed to be all at once plunged "*in medias res*," and the

story of two lives was unfolded before me as a book might open.

"When I first knew him years ago, he was such a beautiful, bright creature, lithe and active, full of life and hope and fervor. It seemed to him so easy and so certain to do great things in the world. He was just called to the Bar. Singularly without near relatives; but the very happiest, sunniest, brightest-hearted creature you can well think of. We soon became great friends, and he used to chatter to me of all his hopes, his castle-building, his noble, chivalrous ideas—somewhat Utopian, I fear me—of how he should be ever the defender of the weak, the wronged, the oppressed. I was so much the elder, that it seemed natural and quite possible to be—friends, and nothing more—"

So far, Margaret got in her history, when I broke in:

"And then—he fell in love with you?"

She shook her head.

"No, that expression won't fit—it is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden. Say, 'he grew to love me,' that suits the case better. He did not mean it; I am sure—" then after a pause, "neither did I."

"He could not help it." I spoke with a conviction that defied contradiction.

So she let me have my way.

A faint flush like the delicate pink that lines the sea-shell rose to her cheeks, seeming to smooth out the lines of care and thought, and to give her back the gift of youth for the moment.

"I suppose not; neither could I; but, for all that when he told me—when he asked me to be his wife, I said it could not be."

"You trampled on your own heart—and his?"

"Yes," she said, quietly. "Three times over—and then—he went." Then came a heavy, long-drawn sigh.

I expect that had been a bad time to live through.

"I told him that the difference was too

great; that time would bring it out. That for him to marry me would be a mistake."

"He did not believe you."

"No, not at the time; but he might have come to do so. I was right to decide as I did."

"Perhaps you were."

I had to make this admission because she was so true herself you could not even equivocate to her; but I made it unwillingly.

"But then, you see, things changed. Mr. Allardyce, you have been so good to us; you have grown so dear to both of us; you seem so like an old, old friend that I should like to tell you the rest; but it is so hard to tell."

I kept silence; I knew that, just then, any words would hurt her more than none.

"Some time after, when he and I seemed to have drifted quite apart, I met a man who knew him, and he told me—what you have seen."

"That Ruthven was blind?"

"Yes, that no one quite understood the case—they don't now, you know—he had these terrible attacks of pain, and gradually his sight went; first it grew misty, then more dim, then dark. It was terrible to me to hear it. It seemed too piteous to be borne. But none of us can do other than lie down under the inevitable—fighting is no use. I thought over it all, prayed, wrestled with myself, and then—I—went to him."

Once more the warm color rose to the very ripples of her hair. Deeper this time was that rosy flood of beautiful shame than before. We were both silent a while. The river, glinting in the evening sunshine, was smooth as glass in the still air; the tall spears of the purple loose-strife, mirrored in the water, scarcely stirred—the current was so still. Now and then a bandy-coot slid out from the osiers and darted across to the reeds on the opposite bank, or a red-brown water-

rat set sail from his hole on one bank to that of a friend on the other. A thrush laughed in the trees, and a nimble little cole-tit ran twittering up the bole of a willow.

How fair, how beautiful it all was—in such strange contrast to the blighted, broken life of the man whose story I had just heard! It was my companion who broke the long silence:

"So, after all, ours was what we call here an 'Ann Hathaway courtship.' You see, in the Midlands, where every flower and old custom seems culled from Shakespeare's pages—which is another way of saying that his hand gathered and set them there—every one is familiar with his life and sayings, so I may say that, like him, my theory and my practice are at variance. He said the woman should 'take an elder than herself;' yet married Ann Hathaway. I said the same—yet married Malcolm after all. Well, well,"—this with a passing sweet smile—"though my hair is turning so white, to him it is always the same. It feels the same to his hand now, as the first time he ever smoothed it down—it will always seem the same; and, indeed, he will not believe me when I tell him it is lined so thick with gray."

We wandered long by the river and through the wood, talking of all things in heaven and earth, so that when we reached the farm the gloaming had fallen like a veil over everything, and a faint mist, snow-white, stretched out the course of the river.

There at the gate stood Malcolm.

"I heard your footsteps ever so far off," he said, smiling. "I am like the bats—fond of the gloaming, you see," he added, turning to me, with a soft laugh; "it suits my eyes."

Then we all three went in together; but he took my arm this once, because I was going in the morning. So the long, white hand, with its blood-red ring, lay against my sleeve, and somehow, on my

long journey next day the meaning of it haunted me.

After all we are very like straws or fallen leaves on a river—drifted here and there by the wind and stream of circumstances.

I wrote to my good friends at Orchard Farm; they, or rather Margaret, wrote to me. The influences of her pure, sweet nature left me not—showing itself in deeper earnestness of life, in higher aim of life. We even planned—in writing—another holiday for me "among the lavender," when the summer should come again.

And then family affairs of my own took me abroad. I traveled far, and from place to place. My name and fame as a writer were growing everywhere. I had a warm welcome; and so came spring and grew to summer, and summer ripened to autumn, and paled again to winter, and still I was a wanderer. But with summer, like the swallows, I came back to England—to the hum and stir and dear delightful sense of life that only London gives one.

My sister was at my rooms to greet me, and had all things fair and sweet set out to welcome me.

"I am so glad you like the lavender, dear," she said, "I bought it of a poor, tired-looking girl in the street to-day. I bought all she had."

There it stood, a miniature grove of blue-gray spears, set in a wide china bowl, and its faint, pungent scent filled all the room.

"Why, Stevie," said my sister, suddenly, "how strange you look! After all, perhaps you don't like the smell of lavender?"

I did not answer.

I was sitting before a pile of letters, proofs—what not?—all waiting to be opened; and there, among the rest, I saw a small, square parcel, like a box, directed to me in a dear, familiar hand. It had been registered, and the date on the stamp

was that of three months back. I cut the string. My fingers trembled. The perfume of the lavender had taken my thoughts back to Orchard Farm; and now, what was this little packet that perchance smelt of lavender too?

I opened it—almost dropped it—uttered an exclamation under my breath—felt as though some cold hand touched my heart.

Before me lay a ring with one blood-red stone; beneath it a scrap of paper; written there these words:

"I send you this in memory of him.—M. R."

Not another word.

The next evening, just at sundown, I reached Orchard Farm.

The lavender was all a-bloom by the gate, the casement set wide, as it was wont to be.

But my heart felt like lead in my bosom, for a strange dog barked wildly at me as I lifted the latch, and a gruff voice asked me what I wanted, while a dreadful-looking old crone came hobbling to the door in answer to my knock.

Which of us has not known the agony of visiting some dear-loved spot to find all its surroundings changed to discord?

Bad as I had imagined things might be, the reality exceeded my worst forebodings.

"What may be your business?" said the hag, whose rusty bonnet sat on end on her shaggy head.

"Has Mrs. Ruthven left the Farm?" I said, in as steady a voice as I could command. "Her husband—died" (how the words seemed to choke me); "but—can you tell me where she—what has—"

Here my eloquence came to an end.

"Oh! yes," chimed in the old woman,

in a querulous voice, "her good gentleman died. I helped to clean up after the funeral. He was sick a long while, and they had a doctor from Lunnun. But it weren't no good, bless you! He just went off and knowed nobody for days and days, and she a-standing by him, dumb like, strokin' of his 'and."

"Yes, yes," I said; "but after that—what of her—what of his wife?"

"Oh!—she was never much to reckon on—she wasn't. She looked like a ghost, as the sayin' is, ever after he was took, and she just died."

"Died!"

I really think I must have shouted that one word—so strangely the old crone looked at me.

"Ay—all of a suddint; settin' by the chair as he'd used to be in. Died—why of course she died; just six weeks after 'im. Didn't they send for me to streak her out, and didn't I see her in her coffin? She looked like a picter in wax for all the blessed world; and she's buried along o' him—as you may see for yoursel' if you go down—"

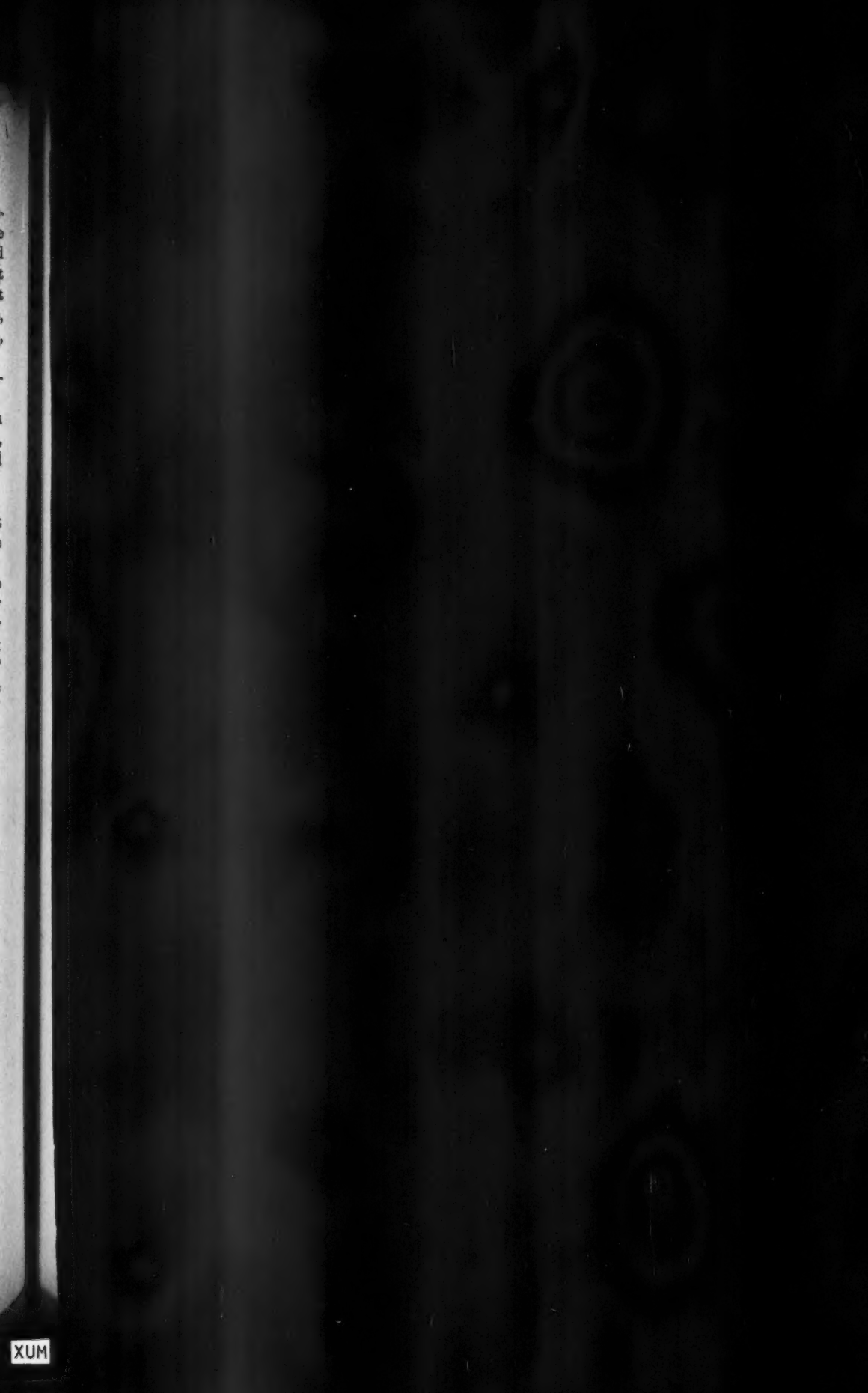
But I heard no more.

I dropped a sovereign into the shriveled hand of the amazed old creature, and hurried out of the sound of her voice.

But not before I had hastily gathered a spray or two of lavender to lay upon the grave where Margaret and her husband slept.

They had passed away out of my life; but the radiance they had made for me would endure—ay, and has endured.

Sad at heart, lonely for those "gone before," I could yet be glad and infinitely thankful at heart for the dear memory of that holiday "among the lavender." Years have passed, and I am thankful for it still.



"NOT AS OTHER WOMEN ARE."

THERE was no sound in the kitchen save the regular tick of the clock on the mantel and the dreaming purr of the two beautiful cats that lay on the hearth-rug asleep. For the fiftieth time Dorothy Whitney looked at the clock, and, as she saw that it was almost eleven, she turned her eyes away, with a deep and bitter sigh.

She sat in a low, easy chair, with her head lying against the back, while her hands were motionless in her lap. There was no nervous movement about her, although she had been waiting for some one the whole evening—which will convince the reader better than any elaborate description of her, that she was not an ordinary or a weak-minded woman.

The kitchen was one of those big, cozy ones, which are so seldom seen in the West. There was a wainscot grained in dark walnut, and the walls above were a warm gray. The floor was white and smooth, and the strip of zinc under the stove was so bright that it reflected the forms of the sleeping cats. The stove was beautifully polished, and the wall behind was lined with shining kettles and pans.

Dorothy was the wife of a locomotive engineer, and their home was in the little railroad town of W—, in Oregon. They had been married five years.

At first they had been very happy, and everything had gone well with them; but, not very long ago, Care had knocked at the door, and poor Dorothy, shrinking, rebelling, crying out against it, had yet been

forced to open the door wide and let her in, and she had been there ever since.

Dorothy was never alone now. That unwelcome guest sat there always, looking at her with stern, immovable eyes, or following her about over fields and country lanes; she sat there now, more stern and gaunt than ever, for it was "pay-day," and John should have been home five hours ago.

Five hours! It is a long time for a young wife to sit motionless, waiting, while she knows her husband is spending the time and money that should have been hers in some vile saloon "down-town."

Prohibition was defeated in Oregon, though, and Dorothy's fate is only that of, I fear, the majority of women in this Pacific-washed State.

It had now been two years since John first began taking an "occasional drink" when he came in from a hard run. He needed something to strengthen him, he said, when his wife, in her first terrible anguish, seemed unable to bear it, and lay all day like one dead—neither eating nor drinking, nor yet uttering one reproach.

That he had just once broken every promise he had made her during their courtship; that he had just once taken several drinks with "the boys;" that he had just once come to their perfect little home with bloodshot eyes—therein lay enough sorrow to last Dorothy a lifetime.

Some women would have wearied him with weeping and with entreaties that it should not occur again. But not so Dor-

thy. That the man she had trusted with her life and her honor should have been so weak, so degraded, so lost to every noble thought, as to come to her in that condition and expect her to overlook it—therein lay the well-spring of her suffering.

Only, when he came to her bedside and asked her to forgive him, she clasped her arms about his neck, and leaned upon his breast, while sobs—so dry, so terrible, yet so powerless to relieve her suffering that they seemed to tear her very bosom—burst from her.

John was awed. He had felt just a little bit ashamed when he came home, and he had rather expected a few tears and reproaches, followed by a happy "making up." He had often heard the boys talk about the "scenes" they had with their wives when they had stayed out late and indulged too freely in the sparkling cup; and they had always been unanimous in declaring that the reconciliation more than compensated for the scene, and that women *must* have their "scolds" out, once in a while, anyhow.

But—no scolding, no reproaches, no tears, even! What kind of wife was this? He was perplexed and nonplused, and all he could say was that he would never do it again, and that she must forgive him—which was neither very comforting nor very original.

Forgive him! Ah! what wife does *not* forgive? What else can she do? But, does that make the wound less deep; or, does it heal any sooner, because of it?

But the more John thought about it, the more injured did *he* feel. Why couldn't his wife have been like other women, so he could have had a "lark" occasionally without all that trouble afterward? He wouldn't have minded tears and sharp words—no, not one bit. But, when a man sees that he is making his wife suffer—really suffer, without any shamming about it—why, it somehow makes him feel queer-like and uncom-

fortable, and no man likes to feel that way.

He was very proud of his wife, of course. He liked to feel that she was intellectually superior to the other men's wives. She kept them all at a distance, too, in a pretty, courteous way at which they could not take offense. He was glad she didn't paint her face, nor dress in their exaggerated style, nor keep her house so untidily; but he wished—oh! he did wish that she would take a few lessons of them in wifely lenience to her husband's faults!

It had taken two years of "occasional drinks" to bring him to this conclusion, and it had been a bitter time for Dorothy. She saw her husband's love slipping away from her, and was powerless to prevent it. That was where the strength of her character revealed itself.

It would have been so easy to school herself to overlook it, and then he would not have learned to shrink from her clear eyes, and to deceive her.

As the clock struck twelve to-night, she heard the gate click. The dog, lying asleep beside her, with his nose against her, as he always lay when she was alone, sprang up with a low bark of recognition. His mistress did not move, but her eyes, with a look of dread, turned to the door. Was a man, a husband, a creation of God, or a brute, a monster, a something to shrink from and to loathe, about to enter her presence?

There was an unsteady step on the porch, and he entered—he who was her husband, guardian, protector. He, to whom she had given her young, pure life five years before, without one doubt for the future. He was a tall, fine-looking man, by whom nature had done nobly, and of whom any woman might have been proud.

But, to-night, his face was pale, his eyes bloodshot, his form stooping. Dorothy was prepared for it, but yet the knife went afresh into the wound in her heart. He looked at her, and something in the

speechless agony of her face angered him.

"Oh! you're up yet!" he said, shortly. "I'd advise you to not wait for me after this, unless you can look a little brighter when a fellow comes in."

She arose, with a numbness in her limbs and a strange ringing, as of many bells, in her ears. She was very pale, but perfectly calm.

The dog stood near, looking at her with brown eyes full of affection and inquiry.

"Will you have your supper now?" she asked her husband, in a low voice, turning her unhappy eyes away from his face.

"No, I won't have any supper," he replied, with an oath. "What does a fellow want with supper when he's been havin' a jolly good time? All he wants 's a smile when he comes home—which he never gets, 's far 's I see."

Then he went into the bedroom, still talking and using an oath with every other word, leaving his wife standing motionless and white as death.

"O God!" she cried out, to her breaking heart. "The time has, indeed, come! Always, *always*, have I said that he should never curse me; and he never shall again—never! This is the first time, and it shall be the last. Some women might forgive it, but I cannot. Above my own happiness, above even *him*, I prize my own soul. And if I overlooked it—if I stooped to the degradation of living with a man who could use such language to his wife, I should dishonor my soul; I should be forever untrue to that within me which is God's, and never man's! O God! help my womanhood to arise and assert itself! Help me to not falter, for I can bear this life no longer, and, yet—to leave him—is death!"

Suddenly he appeared at the door.

"Come and find my handkerchief, curse you!" he exclaimed, violently. "Nothin's ever in its place, and all you ever do 's to sit there and rock your lazy self; and

then when I come home, sit an' look at me 's if I'd just come out of a graveyard, instead o' havin' a jolly good time. Now, I'll bet you there aint a man 's 'll go home to-night, but what'll get a smile, 'cept me."

"I am not like other women," she managed to say, though her voice was broken by the sobs that arose thick and fast in her throat. "You ought to know that, dear," she added, with an involuntary and pathetic tenderness, lifting her eyes, dim with anguish, to his. "You always said—you were—glad I was not—not—like them!" She could say no more.

"No," he answered slowly and brutally, "you're *not* like 'em, an' if I ever said I was glad, I lied—that's all. How I ever come to marry such a—such a—*fool*"—and the oath was more terrible than the epithet—"is mor'n I know now. I'm sick enough of it, though; I know that much. When a man can't stay out a night now an' then, without such an infernal row at home, it's time things was changed."

Then, with a drunken glare at her, he went into the bedroom, and throwing himself on his bed, fell into a heavy stupor.

Dorothy drew herself up, and stood, tall and straight—and alone. There comes a time in every woman's life when she must stand alone, and well is it for her if her mind is strong enough to hold up her body—to allow no faltering, no weakness, no turning back.

Though every fibre of her being was quivering with pain, there was no hesitation in her mind. Only the sobs arose in her throat almost faster than she could force them back. Not one gained utterance, but, oh! she felt the struggle in her breast!

She leaned her elbow on the mantel, and rested her head on her hand. How often she had stood thus, in those first happy days of her marriage, while John had sat idly smoking, but looking at her with eyes that told more plainly than

words how much he loved her, and how happy and contented he was with only her.

There had been no question then of his going out evenings. Why had he changed? Could it be that all men wearied of their wives as soon as the honeymoon had waned?

She suffered as she stood there as only a woman who cannot lightly give up her own unalterable convictions of right can suffer; but she did not falter.

The cats still purred in the soft warmth of the fire, and the dog lay with his nose against her foot, and his earnest eyes watching her every movement. She looked at him, stooped down and caressed him, and a sob that almost choked her burst into life on her lips, coming in the face of such terrible resistance that for a moment her whole form quivered.

Presently a loud, shrill whistle smote the summer air. She started and shivered. Then she went quickly to a closet and took down a shawl and hat.

"They were mine before I was married," she said. "I will take nothing that he ever gave me."

One moment she leaned against the door of the room where her husband lay; then she went swiftly out.

The dog, with a low, affectionate whine, sprang after her, but she patted his head and pushed him gently back. His faithful eyes followed her, and her mare, hearing her light step pass the stable, gave a low, glad whinny of recognition.

Thus, with no farewell save those of the dumb animals who loved her because of her tender care of them, she left the home where, five years before, she had come, the happiest woman on earth.

In the early dawn John Whitney awoke from his drunken slumber. In a moment he remembered everything—even the oaths he had uttered before his wife—and a feeling of deepest shame took possession

of him. Never before had he felt quite so abased.

His eyes turned again and again to the door, as he lay there, expecting every moment to see her enter, as was her custom, bringing his cup of coffee. But she did not come, nor did he hear any sound; and presently he arose and dressed.

Then, again, he waited, but still she did not come, and, opening the door at last, he passed into the kitchen. The fire had died out and the ashes lay white and cold on the hearth. In the dim morning light everything looked ghostly to him. The dog came to him and laid his nose wistfully against him—but where was *she*?

He leaned his throbbing head on his hand. Surely it could not be that she had left him! There was madness in the thought. And yet he could not have blamed her; she had always been too far above him. She was his wife, yet never had he found the way to her soul.

And lately he had neglected her—oh! he saw it now; but never again should she have cause to complain, for he realized at last that his wife was more to him than was even his own pleasure.

A step came across the porch, and he shivered as he went to open the door, for it was not hers. A man stood there with a telegram, and trembling in every limb, John Whitney read it:

"No. 15 wrecked. Your wife is dying. The engineer was drunk."

—

An hour later John Whitney knelt by the wife he had sworn to love and to protect till death should them part.

There was no reproach in those dying eyes—only unutterable anguish; and when she spoke, it was slowly and laboriously.

"O John!" she said, "do—not—grieve.

I could never have lived—with you again—nor could I have lived without—you. I am glad—it has come—so soon. Oh! in this hour—darling—I forget all the wrong, and remember—only—your love

—and tenderness—to me. If I had been as other women are—but—I—was not—”

John Whitney was alone with his conscience and his dead.

ELLA HIGGINSON.

JAMIE.

NIGHT shut down, sultry and lowering, over the crowded ward of the Children's Hospital. Never in the annals of the institution had there been so many candidates for admission. Never had so great a number of homeless little waifs been snatched, bruised and bleeding, from beneath the trampling hoofs of horses, or from under the crushing weight of heavy dray-wheels, and never had tenement houses furnished more victims of crazy stairways and drunken brawls.

A double row of cots had been hastily improvised the entire length of the hall, and all were filled with pale-faced sufferers, quiet and patient for the most part, luxuriating in the unwonted comfort of clean beds, fresh night-clothing, and simple, abundant food. The subdued rays of the night-lamps flung weird shadows on the walls, transforming the staid nurses with their snowy caps into veritable fairy god-mothers, and the tiny invalids themselves into grotesque hobgoblins. The tireless attendants flitted noiselessly hither and thither, bathing and fanning the feverish faces, and administering cooling drinks. The head nurse slowly ascended the broad stairway, after a cozy cup of tea in her snugger down-stairs, whither she resorted for much-needed rest. She entered quietly,

and cast a comprehensive glance over her domain, her benignant, motherly face smiling a response to the welcoming glances of the little ones. In a partially-curtained alcove leading from the hall was a cot somewhat apart from the others. The occupant, a boy of some seven summers, with features preternaturally aged and sharpened by suffering, observed the nurse's entrance with a gleam of satisfaction lighting his solemn brown eyes.

“Nurse!” At the sound of the weak, plaintive voice, she turned and quickly crossed to the alcove, dropping the curtain as she entered.

“Well, what is it, Jamie, laddie? Is the poor little back aching again this evening?” softly stroking the short, crisp brown hair back from the transparent, blue-veined temples.

“Oh! no, Nurse, I'm just as comfortable, only so tired! After you've been round to all the others, will you come back to me? I want to tell you something.”

“That I will, my lamb—and here's something I was nigh forgettin' as will cheer you up a bit. The pretty lady you love so well left it for you. She would not disturb you, you were sleeping so sweet”—lifting a bunch of violets, dewy and fragrant.

The helpless hands quivered ecstatically. "Oh! the dear posies! Lay 'em right on the pillow, close to me, please, Nursey. We'll thank the pretty lady to-morrow, ever so much. I'll be *just* as good, even if you're a long time, Nursey. I won't cry or fret once."

"That's my brave boy. I'll be soon back again," and, with a few lingering touches, the nurse stole out and commenced her nightly round, shaking up a pillow here and there, rubbing restless limbs into composure, or coaxing a small rebel to swallow a particularly nauseous draught. After making the entire circuit of the ward, she came again to Jamie's alcove and quietly seated herself by his side, feeling for the feeble pulse in the slender wrist.

"Now, my laddie, what did you want to tell your old Nursey?"

The heavy lids lifted slowly from the great, brown eyes. "I heard what the Doctor said to you this morning when he thought I was asleep."

The nurse glanced keenly at the sharp face.

"Well, Jamie, boy, and what was it you heard the good Doctor say?"

"He said," replied Jamie, earnestly, feeling his way carefully along the syllables, "make him as comfer'ble as you can—he can't last long."

She started almost imperceptibly ere she said, cautiously:

"And what do you think he meant by that, dearie?"

"He meant I was going to the Heaven-country where my mother is," replied Jamie, steadily, never removing his fixed gaze from the kindly face bending over him. The nurse wiped her eyes, surreptitiously; then she said, tenderly:

"Laddie, the poor little back would always have a twist and an ache in it, and the wee bits of legs would never be strong enough to carry you about any more. Sure, it will be beautiful to go to the mother, and have a fine, straight body free from the pains; now won't it, my lamb?"

"Yes," sighed Jamie, contentedly, "I'll be glad to go to the pretty Heaven-country; but, Nursey, you're *sure*, *all* children have mothers, don't they? I never heard anybody tell of mine," a new anxiety clouding the pinched forehead.

"Every blessed child that's born into the world," replied the nurse, fervently.

"And you're sure she haint forgotten me; it's a long time, an' I was such a little fellow."

"Forgotten ye? why, bless your heart, laddie, like enough she's been a-watchin' for ye every single day."

The great eyes opened to their widest extent.

"Why, she must be so tired waiting, but I'll go soon—maybe to-night, do you s'pose, Nursey?"

"Maybe," replied the nurse, hopefully, brushing the mist from her eyes.

"Jamie, lad," she added, coaxingly, "you'll leave a kind word for the father?"

A spasm of anger convulsed the pale forehead and the thin hands clinched convulsively.

"No, I won't! I *hate* him!" he muttered.

"Oh! my lad, my lad, you must not go with such thoughts in your little heart; it must be all white and pure and clean. It's but a bad father he's been to you, dearie, but can't you think of a bit of pleasantness when he wasn't in the drink?"

Jamie lay silently pondering.

"He always was in the drink," he murmured, "an' it's the blows and the kicks an' the starvin' that ails me—I heard 'em say so—an' I *hate* him!"

Very tenderly the nurse gathered the cold, fluttering fingers in her warm clasp, and in homely words softly repeated the story of the Love divine, all-knowing, all-suffering, all-forgiving.

Jamie listened intently, a look of wonder dawning on his tiny face. If no conception save the wondrous mother-love he craved entered his little darkened soul, surely that was acceptable in the Divine

sight. How can our longing souls measure the Infinite save by magnifying that finite love to which we cling with such intensity? She ended impressively:

"Now Jamie, boy, you can say, 'I forgive him' with all your heart?"

Jamie lay motionless for some minutes.

"You think my mother will want me to say it, Nursey?"

"I'm sure of it, laddie."

"Maybe *she* had to say it, too," he continued, thoughtfully. "I *can't* say it, now, but I'll try before I go. Now kiss me good-night, Nursey, and I'll sleep a little, so I'll be all ready. You'll hold my hand tight, all the way, won't you?"

"That I will," smoothing the sheet over the misshapen shoulders. "I'll hold it close in mine till mother takes it safe in hers, laddie!"

A look of ineffable peace crept over the little face.

"I'll tell her how good you've been to me; and when you come, I shall know, an' we'll both be right there to meet you."

With softly dropping tears the nurse changed the pillow, and seated herself for her watch beside the dying child. So quietly he slept that she frequently bent

over him to see if, indeed, the breath had ceased to flutter between the pale lips.

Midnight came, and, as the bell rang out from the neighboring steeple, he seemed to waken. The feeble hands groped helplessly for the strong, warm fingers that clasped them instantly. The brown eyes opened wide, and the nurse gazed breathlessly at their rapt expression.

"Mother has waited so long, she is so glad I'm coming!"

A moment's pause, and then a gentle murmur: "All white, and pure, and clean. *I do—forgive—father!*"

The next morning "the pretty lady" that Jamie loved, clothed the tiny, crippled body in snowy garments, strewed fresh violets around it, and followed the little casket to its resting-place in a pleasant nook just outside the busy city. Beside the grave knelt a wild-eyed, haggard man, too brutalized, alas! to even grasp the meaning of that last divine message of little Jamie, which, nevertheless, throbbed unceasingly through his besotted brain—"I do forgive father!"

MARION E. PICKERING.

THE USES OF ADVERSITY.—Adversity has often developed strength, energy, fortitude, and persistence that prosperity could not have produced. The dignity of self-support and self-respect often has been gained when an external prop has been removed.

FALSE INDEPENDENCE.—Many speeches have been made to young men and women on the virtue of *self-reliance*. A very good thing it is in its place, but it has its limitations. A youth who should start out in life with the boast, "I mean to be independent and ask nobody's assistance," would be a presumptuous fool. He would soon discover that somebody must teach him his trade or his profession,

and afterward certain other people must assist him by being his customers or his clients, or else he will starve. No one in this world can cut loose from everybody else. In the religious life self-reliance is spiritual suicide. Poor Peter got the most valuable lesson of his life when he trusted Peter; the mocking finger of a servant-maid made a poltroon of him.

MODERATION.—No one can hurry through early and middle life, filling the days with exciting business and the nights with exciting pleasures, and still hope to enjoy a vigorous and valuable old age. Moderation, temperance, a calm mind, and an unburdened conscience are the first essentials.

MOTHERS.

THE LITTLE SISTER.

A HUSH in mother's chamber,
Six rollicking girls and boys
Leave all their books and playthings,
Leave all their fun and noise,
And stand with wondering silence
And smiles of keen delight,
To greet the baby sister
That only came last night.

Oh! never were cheeks so dimpled
Or such dainty rosebud lips,
And never such cunning little feet,
Or delicate finger tips;
And never was hair so silken,
And never were eyes so blue;
For she was the sweetest baby
In all the world we knew.

A five-years old, dainty darling,
With a wealth of golden hair,
Repeating her tiny speeches,
Or keeping house on the stair.
Filling our house with sunshine
And merry childish glee,
And we knew that *then* our sister
Was as sweet as sweet could be.

A joyous and happy maiden,
Now grave with her slate and book,
Now seeking the haunts of the squirrel,
Or the wild flowers shady nook.
Ever glad with her singing
To join with the bird's sweet chime,
And we thought, O little sister!
This is your sweetest time!

A rare and glorious promise
Of blossoming womanhood,
Pure and fair as a lily,
Gentle and true and good.
Singing with every duty,
Scattering love's bright rays,

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And we said: "Ah, now she is having
Her very sweetest days."

But a band of loving angels
Looking down from the pure White
Throne,
Had watched our little sister
And wanted her for their own.
So they came one day, and bore her
To a fairer, sunnier clime,
And we know that in Heaven has blossomed
Our darling's sweetest time.

ADA SIMPSON SHERWOOD.

WHY NOT?

"LITTLE boys must not ask so many questions," said the busy mother.
"Why not, mamma?" was the quick query of the eager little one at her side.
"Oh! because they shouldn't," was her unsatisfactory reply.

"But *why because*, mamma?" still pleaded the child.

"Why just because—there, run away and don't bother me any more," and the mother, worried and troubled about many things, as mothers are apt to be, all intent just then upon the pies she was baking—"for Mrs. Johns is coming to dinner"—went on with her work, and did not notice the disappointment showing so plainly in her boy's face as he went slowly out of the door and sat down in the shade of the maple in the corner of the yard.

A little later "Auntie," coming out, found him sitting there looking so troubled
"Why, Freddie, what has happened?" she asked.

"Oh! nothing much, only—well—Auntie, why mustn't little boys ask questions? What makes God let me think so many questions if I mustn't ask them?"

I don't want to 'bother' mamma, but I do want to know, oh! *lots of things*."

"Auntie" drew the little fellow into her lap, and, in the long talk that followed, many a question was asked and answered, while within the warm kitchen the baking went steadily on; the row of pies grew long, and was flanked by the big loaves of cake and the dainty custards. The mother, all absorbed in preparations for a good dinner, thought no more of her boy's eager questioning, but I, sitting in the wide porch, doing the family sewing, watched both pictures—the one under the flickering shadow of the maple, and the other in the kitchen—and in my inmost heart I wondered did the mother choose the better part? Did she not all unwillingly, poor woman, but so surely break a thread in the cord which bound her boy's heart to hers when she told him to "run away and not bother"? "But the baking must be done," you say? Must it? Must just so many pies, cakes, and custards be made whatever else is let go? Is it more important that Mrs. Johns sees our table well-spread with dainties, which, however much they may "tickle the palate," really do little to nourish the body, than that Freddie shall be kept close to his mother and his eager mind be fed? I know she does not mean to be unjust to her boy, but, in the morning, she is "too busy," and at night "too tired" to be "bothered;" and so it goes on day after day, and slowly, surely the child is learning to look elsewhere than to "mamma" for help and sympathy in all that he is so anxious to learn, and both are missing one of life's most precious joys, and, with it, the soul of this most sacred companionship which should ever be between parent and child. Is it right? Does a table filled with dainties make up for these things which are left out? Will it be better for Freddie to remember his mother merely as a good cook and a model house-keeper rather than as a mother in the true sense of the word?

I know there is very much that must be done; that, no matter how sure we may each be that the needs of the mind and soul are of greatest importance, circumstances force many of us to give the most of our time to the getting and making of food and raiment for the body, but need we let these things cumber us so? Need

we always be so weighed down by them that we cannot sometimes draw our breath full and free in a higher atmosphere? Can we not live above that which occupies our hands, part of the time at least? Can we not somehow find time and patience to answer the little ones as we shall some day wish we had done? They have so much to learn; so much to teach us, too, if we will but "lead on gently," as we should—and, with Freddie, I ask, why not ask questions?

Are we not always questioning and wondering ourselves—then why not the children also? How often some question or remark of theirs comes to us with all the force of a revelation. Oh! the wondrous wisdom of childhood! How can we understand it but by remembering that "their angels do always behold the face of the Father," and may not some of the questions they ask us be angel whispers to them?

Once a blue-eyed boy looked in my face, and asked with sweet seriousness, "How deep is the world, mamma, and how high?" Who could answer him? Who could tell him of the wondrous height and depth of this life of ours, which eternity alone can measure? Now God has led him on where all questions are answered; but the thoughts that woke in my heart linger yet.

There is no ministry so blessed in its fruitfulness as that which comes to us through the little ones clustering around our hearthstones. How they stimulate us to deep thinking and to true action! How much more they do for us than we can possibly do for them. Then let them ask questions and do not dare answer them lightly or falsely. They seek the true bread of life—take care that you put them in the way of finding it. Deal with them as you yourself would be dealt with—tenderly and truthfully—and you will find much of your best education coming to you through trying to teach them.

Was it the mother of Sir Humphrey Davy who was immortalized in the school-readers of my childhood, because she answered her boy's inquiries with an unflinching "Read and you will know"? I, too, would lead a child to read and find out many things for himself. I would have him make good use of his eyes and ears as he goes through life, but at the

same time I think a talk with father or mother is often better than much reading, and neither parents nor child can afford to miss the great gain, the peculiar pleasure of conferring together. Above all things, don't say "run away and don't bother me." If you cannot talk with him, then tell him of a time when you can, and be sure to keep your appointment with him. If you cannot answer the question so confidently asked of you, say so, and don't seek to hide your ignorance with an evasive reply or a "don't bother." The child so quickly learns to see through all such shams, and, as he does so, his confidence in you grows less, and so the barrier between you is begun; but, if you are truthful and frank with him, his faith remains unshaken, and thus the inclination to come to you in all his little perplexities grows strong, becomes a habit, the power of which shall save him from many a wrong step, from many a pain. Don't laugh at him. Many a tender child-soul has been cruelly warped and dwarfed by unthinking laughter. It is a woeful thing to hurt these little ones of the Father's kingdom in that way. Everything is so real, so full of wonderment to a child. Remember it, parents, remember their tenderness, and the long road before them, and lead them carefully, prayerfully along.

Sometimes it is very hard to answer children's questions so that they will fully understand our meaning, but, if we look about us, we can often find help from nature's way. A wide-awake little girl has questioned and wondered much about the baby, whose little grave she saw in the garden. She could not comprehend that it was not the real baby buried there, and expected that the soul of which I told her would have to grow out of the grave in some way. But one day we found a chrysalis, which we kept carefully until the large, perfect butterfly came from it. There was the empty shell, the outgrown form, in which it had lived for a little time, and there the butterfly, free and beautiful, no longer needing or using its former home. With these before her, it was easy to teach her of the soul's freedom from the dead body, and of the higher, more beautiful life to which baby had come. Her eyes grew large with wonder as she listened, but her mind grasped the idea, and the lesson learned that day will

never be forgotten; henceforth, death to her will mean but a leaving of an outgrown body, and a going on in a better way without it, and this is surely great gain to her.

EARNEST.

SMALL ECONOMIES IN CHILDREN'S DRESS.

I SUPPOSE every mother is anxious to dress her children as prettily and tastefully as possible, and this is the easiest matter in the world, the stores being literally loaded with charming articles of apparel for the little people, provided one has plenty of money. But the great majority of people are not so situated; and to many, whose incomes are limited, I may say, very limited, it becomes a matter of importance to obtain the maximum of material and design at the minimum cost.

Now, as a girl, I disliked work very much, but with a family of little ones to dress, I found that I must devote considerable time to the needle, and now, I can say with truth, I positively like it—the shaping, designing, and making of children's clothes.

To begin at the beginning, I must say I love to see a baby in white; nothing else suits so well the exquisite complexion and fair, round limbs. "But it is so expensive," objects a careful mother, "and such a trouble to wash." To this I answer I have not found it so, and at the present time I have two babies wearing white pelisses and hoods, which I not only made but always wash myself—and that I believe is the secret of their preservation. One pelisse and cape has served three children in succession, and has been washed—I should be afraid to say how many times—and still it looks nice. It is made of cream-serge flannel, and was originally lined with soft twill calico, but as I have recently adopted the all-wool system of clothing, this has been removed. The pelisse is made in the usual way with a cape long enough to cover the arms. The cape is trimmed with a piece of fancy material, a mixture of silk and wool, and an edging of woollen lace about two inches and a half wide. The body fastens at the back with buttons and button-holes (always far preferable to hooks and eyes for nearly every article of wear-

ing apparel), and the cape is tied with ribbon strings.

As I mentioned before, I am a believer in the system of all-woolen clothing, and for undergarments nothing is nicer than knitting. Little vests and petticoats can be knitted in plain or fancy stitches, and they are not only prettier but far more durable than flannel, and have the further advantage of being much cheaper. It is a mistake to suppose it is very difficult to knit things to shape. On the contrary, it is quite easy to do it in plain stitches, always provided one understands how to increase the number of stitches—*i. e.*, by picking up the thread which lies directly under the next stitch and knitting it; and to decrease, which is done by knitting two stitches together. Now for a simple method of shaping any given article: Cut the pattern out in brown paper, cast on the necessary number of stitches for the length or breadth, whichever way you prefer to work; lay your work from time to time on the pattern and increase or decrease as it demands. Sometimes it is necessary to cast off a certain number, and at others, to add to the original stitches, but the pattern will show where either is necessary.

For an article required to be thick and close, crochet is more suitable than knitting, as it takes up a greater quantity of wool and, consequently, has a fuller appearance. I have what I think an exceedingly pretty hood for a baby girl. It may be done in any stitch that is close, and the merest tyro in fancy work can shape a neatly fitting cap, which should come just over the tip of the back of the ear. For the front, crochet one treble, one chain, alternately all round, except at the back where the curtain comes. Do three or four rows in the same way, putting the crochet-hook right through each hole instead of into part of a stitch. Thus will be formed a band of small holes right round the face into which must be crocheted one treble, five chain, one treble into each hole, commencing nearest the foundation of the hood and working backward and forward in the same way one would form a cascade with lace, taking care that the turn in front every time shall be well filled. When this has been done all over the rows of holes, break off the wool and commence again, about at

the part where the top of the ear will come, and, putting the crochet needle in the centre of the five chain, this time through the stitch, work one double crochet, five chain, one double crochet in the centre of the next five chain, and repeat until the corresponding position on the other side is reached. This row may be done a second time if the front is required very full. Now comes the part that renders the hood so pretty. Cut up some satin ribbon, about an inch and a half wide, into pieces of about three inches in length, fold over and plait in insert at intervals in the fullness of the crochet, taking care to sew to the original rows of holes. The curtain may be made in long treble stitches and loops of chain, increasing the number in every row until it is as large as desired. A bow of ribbon sewn at the back where the hood and curtain join, strings of ribbon, and a cap-front complete the hood. I have just washed mine and it looks almost exactly as it did when new. I will give my method of washing that, and all woolens, and though there are other, and, perhaps, better ways, I find mine a perfect success.

For about a dozen and a half little articles—petticoats, vests, flannel night-dresses, etc., cut up small about a quarter of a pound of good yellow soap and boil in two or three quarts of water, stirring occasionally until the soap is entirely melted. Have ready a bath, or tub, with about a gallon of cold water, into which pour the boiling soap-water; add a tablespoonful of liquid ammonia; stir well, and press in the articles to be washed, moving them about and pressing with the knuckles for a few minutes, then cover with a clean cloth and leave for half an hour. Another good pressing and squeezing, rubbing only such parts as are unusually soiled, is all the actual washing necessary. Draw each article separately through the fingers and rinse in warm, rather hot, water, pass through a wringer if possible, otherwise squeeze the things tightly; avoid wringing with the hands, as it strains the material unduly; pull into shape and hang in the air to dry. The things should be taken in while slightly damp, folded for an hour, and then ironed.

The appearance of the articles when

finished would compensate for double the trouble.

To wash the hood: remove all the ribbon-loops and strings, double together and tack in a folded towel, or piece of clean flannel; proceed in the same way as with the other woollens, but do not hang up to dry. Remove it from the cloth in which it was washed, lay upon a dry, perfectly clean towel, and fold tightly. In a few hours it will be nearly dry, when it will need a little pulling into shape, but an iron must not touch it. If the ribbon was good in the first instance, and is only slightly soiled, it will simply require ironing between two damp handkerchiefs, but if the strings are dirty they may be immersed in a little warm, soapy water, rinsed and ironed quickly, when they will look nearly equal to new.

I was very much worried when my little boy first went into suits as to how to keep his sleeves clean, but pinafores with long sleeves have solved that difficulty. I like a yoke-shape with the sleeves rather loose, and about half an inch longer than those of the jacket, and with a little band to button round the wrist.

PAINSTAKING.—Too much painstaking speaks disease in one's mind, as well as too little. The adroit, sound-minded man will endeavor to spend on each business approximately what of pains it deserves, and with a conscience void of remorse will dismiss it then.—*Carlyle*.

FLOWERS seem intended for the solace of ordinary humanity. Children love them; quiet, tender, contented, ordinary people love them as they grow; luxurious and disorderly people rejoice in them gathered. They are the cottager's treasure, and in the crowded town mark, as with a broken fragment of rainbow, the windows of the workers in whose hearts rests the covenant of peace. To the child and the girl, to the peasant and manufacturing operative, to the grisette and the nun, the lover and monk, they are precious always.—*Ruskin*.

"CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS" is a proverb. Some hold the statement as of Biblical origin, but it is not.

Others attribute it to the famous John Wesley, who perhaps put it into the terse form in which it runs; but it is ages older than Wesley, for it came down in the tractate Mishna from an old Jewish book, where it read, "Outward cleanliness is inward purity or piety." It is so, and if, by some magic spell, the world could wake to-morrow morning physically clean, it would wake pure also in spirit and godly in comprehension of goodness.—*Dr. Richardson*.

A GOOD CUSTOM.—There is an old family custom in Switzerland, hallowed by centuries, which allays irritation in the heart forthwith, maintaining peace there—a custom blessed by God, and more likely than any other to keep a family together. The last to go to bed, whether husband or wife, recites aloud the Lord's Prayer.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE.—It is the right side. The times may be hard, but it will make them no easier to wear a gloomy and sad countenance. It is the sunshine, and not the cloud, that makes the flower. The sky is blue ten times where it is black once. You have troubles, so have others. None are free from them. Trouble gives sinew and tone to life—fortitude and courage to man. That would be a dull sea, and the sailor would never get skill, where there was nothing to disturb the surface of the ocean. What though things look a little dark, the lane will turn, and night will end in a broad day. There is more virtue in one sunbeam than in a whole hemisphere of clouds and gloom.

TRUE STRENGTH.—Men are apt to mistake the strength of their feeling for the strength of their argument. Heated minds resent the chill touch and relentless scrutiny of logic.

INDUSTRY.—If wit or wisdom be the head, if honesty be the heart, industry is the right hand of every vocation, without which the shrewdest insight and the best intentions can execute nothing.

HOME CIRCLE.

HINTS FOR THE HOME.

COLD winter with his icy fetters is here once more, and we who have been spared through the heat and worry as well as the beauty of summer, have begun ere this to prepare warm clothing for our own families, and, perchance, for the suffering ones around us; but sickness, visitors, or manifold other reasons may have prevented many from finishing their winter's sewing, and a few suggestions, late as they are, may not be amiss. If your pocket-books are not well filled, I will give you a page from my own experience in economy. I had worn my long coat for several years, and of course was rather tired of it, and was determined to have a jacket, but how? I brought down by the warm fire all the old coats and pants I could find. After selecting those of the same texture of all colors, I laid on my patterns, and, after much turning and contriving, concluded I had enough material for a jacket. After ripping I discarded all the pieces that were too much worn or that were too small. I then bought two packages of Diamond dye, and making a *very strong* dye, colored all together, and after following directions, particularly pressing before dry, I had a uniform jet-black. After making up I bought a good quality of fur, which was not very expensive, and trimmed neck, front, and bottom, and am well satisfied with my winter's jacket. My little girl needed a good, warm coat for playing out-of-doors, and I took one of John's heavy old coats, and, after ripping up, colored with walnut dye. One of the fronts was torn down at the pocket, and I cut this out and pieced straight across. The upper pocket I retained for her use for mittens. I took the canton flannel linings, facing in front with new. To this lining I tacked

the various waddings I had taken from the coats and quilted on the sewing-machine; after sewing outside and lining together, I turned and stitched all round. This coat she has worn for three winters, and is good for another one. I took the pieces that were left of all the garments and sorted them, making shirts, waists, and even dresses of them for the little ones. Thick pieces that were too small for anything else I colored black and made slippers of. After embroidering a flower on the toe, I line throughout with canton flannel. As the soles are the same as uppers, I sew them together on machine, turn, bind with dress-braid, and slip in an old shoe insole covered with canton flannel; these are very comfortable, and are so cheap that all can have them from grandpa to baby. With the sewing-machine cleaned and oiled, and all the bobbins filled, how much can be accomplished in one day's time!

AUNT HOPE.

ALL ABOUT MONEY.

IT was a November morning, clear and cold, and the family gathered around the breakfast-table in a comfortable home in one of our thriving little cities, were evidently enjoying their hot cakes and coffee and the sparkling fire in the grate at the same time. At least the husband and father—a fine, prosperous-looking man, apparently some thirty-five or six years of age—and the three children had that appearance, but a glance at the wife and mother seated at the head of the table, would have shown the most casual observer that she was certainly troubled in mind. She trifled with her food, scarcely tasting it, and from time to time glanced apprehensively at her husband as if she

wished to speak to him and yet could not. At last he folded his napkin and rose from the table.

"Well, I must be off," he said, "it's after eight. Ralph, you and Harry," addressing the two boys of eight and nine years respectively, "musn't be late at school. Good-bye, Tot;," he kissed the tiny girl, a five-year-old baby, his special pet, who held her rosy face up to him, and turning walked into the hall. "Anything wanting, Clara," he asked his wife, as she rose and followed him.

"I must have some money, Henry," she answered, deprecatingly. "It is such a nice day for me to go down-town, and we need—"

"Never mind what we need," he interrupted, sharply. "Why can't you say you want money? that is the one thing. Here," and from a well-filled pocket-book he carefully selected a couple of bills, and handed them to her; "you'll have to make that do, I can't spare any more. What did you do with the twenty I gave you last week?"

"I paid Bridget ten," she said, "and got the children—" but her husband had gone, and she went back into the dining-room. The boys were noisily getting ready for school, and little Lucy clamoring to be taken from the table. It was an hour before she had time to even look at the two bills she had hurriedly placed in her pocket. When at last she did a scornful smile curved her lips. "I wonder," she said, half aloud, "how far he expects this to go toward buying winter clothing—fifteen dollars! and Ralph must have an overcoat. Harry can take his, and I cannot put off getting flannels any longer. The children need them now, and shoes are wanted. Well, I must wait for mine; the boys can't, that's certain. Poor little fellows, they do wear things out so fast. If I only could earn money some way to clothe myself; and yet I do earn it if any one ever did."

She covered her face with her hands.

"What is it, mamma?" cried Lucy, running to her; "you sick?"

Hastily drying her tears, she lifted the child to her lap, and with an effort recovered her composure.

"I ought to be used to being treated like a beggar," she thought, "but I cannot. I know my husband is prospering

in business; he spends money liberally on himself and grudges nothing for the house—that is, nothing for food and fuel—but he seems to think I never need clothing, and that children never wear out any, and that house furnishings last forever. I wish I could run a bill at a store as we do at the grocer's, then I need not ask for money. Sometimes I am tempted to do it, but he would never forgive me; he is particular."

And then her thoughts went back to the problem of getting thirty dollars' worth of goods out of fifteen dollars in money.

She was not very successful, and after a trip down-town she hunted up a cast-off overcoat of her husband's, and set herself to work to get, if possible, a garment fit for Ralph to wear to school.

When Mr. Osborne came home to his five o'clock dinner he was in an excellent humor. Business had been brisk and everything pleasant. He threw a letter to his wife, saying:

"Read that, Clara—it's from Alice—she is coming to make us a little visit. We must see she enjoys it. She has not been here for three years, has she?"

"Three years this fall," she answered, looking up. "I will be glad to have her."

"Of course you will—what ails you; aren't you well?"

"Oh! yes, but I am tired. I had a long walk this morning, and my work—"

He interrupted her—he had a habit of doing that.

"A long walk. Why in the world don't you take a car when you go down-town? And no wonder you're tired of your work. Get a seamstress and have your sewing all done up; that's the way my mother does."

His wife made no reply. She was glad he was in a good humor. If she said anything about money being needful for seamstresses and street-cars, he would fly into a passion. He always talked as if she had cash on hand. People hearing him thought him a very liberal man.

Such was the opinion of his sister Alice, a widow a few years older than himself, who resided with their parents. It had been, as Mr. Osborne said, three years since she had visited them. A part of the time her own health had been feeble, and now, for a year past, the aged mother

had been ailing. A change for the better, however, had occurred of late, and the father and mother had insisted on Alice paying her brother's family a visit, and at the same time resting up, as they said.

Mrs. Hunter, or Alice, as we have called her, was a bright, intelligent woman, sincerely attached to her brother and also to his wife, who had been one of her girlhood's friends, and she had not been an inmate of their home many days until she observed the change in her sister-in-law.

Clara had been always cheerful, fond of her children, and devoted to her husband, liking the society of her friends, ready to give her time and talents to affording them pleasure. Now she was changed. Her mind seemed preoccupied. She attended carefully to the wants of her family, but seldom smiled. Had nothing to say. Went from home only when compelled to, and, although she welcomed her guest cordially, and appeared sincerely glad to see her, avoided going out in the city whenever she possibly could, insisting on Mr. Osborne escorting his sister to places of amusement, and pleading to be left at home on account of headache or household duties.

"Clara is so changed, Henry," said Mrs. Hunter. "What is the matter with her. She used to be so lively, and to enjoy society so much. She told me she had not made a call or gone out of an evening for three or four years. I think for one thing she sews too much. I never saw anybody make and mend as she does. I tell her she is as old as mother. You ought to compel her to go out more."

"I'm sure it's not my fault, Alice," said her brother; "I have urged her to have her sewing done, and I ask her to go places; I can't compel her," and he assumed quite an injured air.

Mrs. Hunter said no more, but she determined to find out the trouble, and remedy it if possible. She felt the happiness of her brother's family was at stake, and as her visit was to be necessarily short, on account of her mother's precarious health, she set to work in earnest. Without intruding into her sister-in-law's affairs, she soon mastered the situation, and determined to open her brother's eyes, but she was a wise woman, and knew much tact was needful. She was going home on

Monday; to-day was Sunday, and yet she had made no sign, but it chanced, on account of a slight headache, Mr. Osborne went to his wife's room to lie down on the lounge a while, and as Clara had gone to the dining-room to see about tea, she quickly followed. "Come in," he said, pleasantly, as she opened the door.

Alice drew her chair close to her brother's.

"Henry," she said, "I want to talk with you while Clara is down-stairs; you know I am going home to-morrow, and I have been trying to get to speak to you alone, for a week."

Her brother smiled. "It must be important," he said; "I am all attention."

"It's about your business, Henry. I am so sorry you are not getting along, and I want you to write to papa; I am sure he could help you."

"My business, Alice!" interrupted her listener. "What do you know about it?"

"Now, Henry, please don't be angry," she said, deprecatingly, "but I can't help seeing how hard Clara has to work, and how she worries to make one dollar do duty for five or ten. She does all the family sewing, and is always making things over. She made Ralph's school suit out of your old one, and Lucy's cloak of an old overcoat—I never saw such a manager—and, as for herself, how she dresses to look as well as she does, is a puzzle to me. There's her street suit, that black silk—but I will show it to you," and Alice went to her sister-in-law's wardrobe, and opening it, took the dress from the hook and carried it to her brother. "See," she said "this underskirt is all sham except the bottom ruffle. Look under these plaits at the piecing, and here at the under part of the sleeves, and these velvet cuffs and the collar, to eke it out. I had rather make two new dresses than alter and fix one old one: and her cloak, Henry. How long has she had it? It was a long one at first, now it's short. It was trimmed with plush, now it is edged with fur; but it's the same old cloak, and, Henry, it does look shabby by the side of your new overcoat; I couldn't help noticing it. Clara says men in business must dress well, and I suppose that is true." She turned to the wardrobe and replaced the dress.

Mr. Osborne rose to his feet. "Why

in the world," he said, angrily, "does not Clara get better clothes; all she has to do is to say she wants them!"

"That's what I asked her," replied the sister, returning to her chair, "and she said she did not like to ask for money. Now don't, for a minute, think Clara has ever complained to me, for she hasn't. I see for myself that she has not even comfortable things. I said to her Friday morning when we were shopping—or I was, rather—'Get yourself a pair of these walking-shoes, Clara, you need them,' and she said, 'I would, Alice, but I must get Ralph and Harry a pair apiece, or they can't go to school,' and her face flushed so, I was sorry I said anything, but I just made up my mind to speak to you, for if you are so bad off, you certainly ought to talk to papa—but I hear Clara coming; for pity's sake don't let her know I have been—"

The door opened and Mrs. Osborne came in, as Alice picked up a book from the table, and seemed intent on its contents.

"What have you there, Alice?" asked her sister-in-law, as she drew a rocker near the grate and sat down.

"Oh! I am glancing through Whittier. It's one's duty to read *Snow-Bound* every winter," laughed Alice.

"I wish you would read aloud, dear—that is, if Henry has no objection," and Clara looked interrogatively at her husband.

"No objection at all," he replied; "go ahead, Alice."

But as the sweet, clear voice read the beautiful poem, his thoughts did not follow it. He was thinking deeply. His wife sat in such a position that without turning his head he could study her face, and he noticed how care-worn and thin—it was last Friday, Alice had said; yes he remembered she had told him she needed money for shoes. She did not say for herself. How much had he given her? His face grew hot, as he thought of the ten-dollar bill he had so ungraciously handed her. "Well," he said to himself, "why didn't she say that was not enough? I'd have given her more;" just here conscience, that impartial judge, whispered, "Didn't you ask her what she did with money? That you never came in the house but it was called for?" Mr. Osborne's medi-

tations were not very pleasant, and after Alice had gone to her room, he hastily undressed and went to bed.

The next morning he accompanied his sister to the train, and took that opportunity to ask her to say nothing to his father, "for really, Alice," he went on, "my business is prosperous. I have been thoughtless about Clara, but you have waked me up."

"You are not angry with me, then?" she said.

"No, indeed! I am angry at myself; but here we are," as the carriage stopped at the station.

Mr. Osborne went from the station to his office and tried to lose himself in his work, but he was not very successful. What if others besides his sister noticed his wife's pitiful economies? for, worst of all, was the thought of his fine overcoat, and his wife's made-over cloak. How long had she worn it, anyway? He started up at last, and almost said aloud, "She'll not wear it another Sunday," as he put on his overcoat and hat and set out for home.

On his way he stopped at one or two stores and made some purchases, which astonished Mrs. Osborne by being delivered that evening just after she had put Lucy in bed.

"I do not know about these things from Miller & Streeters," she said to her husband, as the servant brought the packages in. "I have not bought anything there. I wonder if Alice could have forgotten."

"I guess it's all right," was the reply. "They are directed here. Open them and see."

"What a lovely cloak!" she exclaimed, as she undid one parcel and unfolded its contents.

"Try it on," said her husband, but she shrank away as he took it and was about to help her.

"It is a mistake," she said. "Indeed, Henry, I did not order it."

"But I did, Clara. I thought it about time you had one, and there is a dress in the other package."

His wife's look of bewilderment was not altogether pleasant to him. Why should she be astonished at his thinking of her needs?

That evening after Ralph and Harry—who were delighted with mamma's new

things—had gone to bed, the husband and wife had a long talk, which resulted in a different arrangement as regarded money matters in the household.

"I tell you what is, Clara," said Mr. Osborne. "It's the constant paying out of small sums that is so annoying. Of course, I knew you were not extravagant, but it was something every day, and it seemed more than it really was. Now you estimate what it costs a month to run the house, and don't under-rate it; include your own and the children's clothing, and I will hand the amount over the first of each month. Of course, you can't get it exact for a while, but you can come pretty near it, and we'll talk it over again." He put his arm around her. "I want to see," he said, "if you can't get rid of that tired, worn-out look."

Tears slowly chased each other down the wife's pale face. "I know I will be happier," she said. "If you only knew how I dreaded asking you for money. I have lain awake hours at night thinking how to avoid it. O Henry! if men knew how they humiliated their wives by treating them as dependants on their bounty, and dealing out to them so grudgingly what ought to be given as theirs rightfully."

"Do all women feel so?" he asked. "I never thought of it in that way, and I do not suppose many men do."

"Perhaps all women do not. A good deal depends on how money is given." Mr. Osborne winced, but his wife continued: "I heard a wife say she never felt any delicacy about it, she considered the purse common to both. Her husband knew she studied their interests."

"Well," interrupted her listener, "I hope now we have matters arranged and things will run smoothly; and, do you know, it's nearly midnight?"

"Only one thing, Henry; if at any time your business should be depressed and you cannot afford as much as usual, you must tell me. Partners must have no secrets."

Mrs. Hunter paid her brother's family another visit a few months later, and was delighted to see the improvement in her sister-in-law's appearance and manner.

"My wife has grown young again, you see, Alice," said Mr. Osborne, the evening

after her arrival. "You are a wise little woman."

She laughed.

"I knew you were only thoughtless, Henry," she said; "half the trouble in the world is caused by thoughtlessness."

"And selfishness, Alice. Set that down with it. I never neglected myself, but I think the lesson will last my lifetime. By the way, we are all going home this summer to see the old folks. I want to consult father on business matters," and he laughed so heartily that little Lucy ran in from her play and her mother called from the next room, "What is the joke, Alice?" Alice did not say. But Mr. Osborne, tossing Lucy toward the ceiling, causing her to scream with delight, replied:

"It's all about money. Clara, you know how fond of money Alice is," and then the three laughed. It is so easy to laugh when people are happy; and now, while these folks are happy let us leave them.

MRS. E. V. WILSON.

THE MOTHER'S LESSON.

I FELT so tired, so weary of earth's perplexing strife,
That I wondered, was it worth it? this busy, hurried life,
With its constant round of duties, which seemed hardly to be done
Before another morning with another round begun.
And some were so distasteful, and some so mean and small,
It seemed as though their doing would not signify at all.
No time for meditation, and but little time for prayer;
No time to seek my closet and refresh my spirit there.
I thought of busy Martha, who, with over-anxious heart,
Implored the blessed Master that her sister might take part;
And I pondered on His answer, I could not see it quite,
But yet, since Jesus said it, most surely it was right.
I felt to be like Mary must be so passing sweet,
To leave all toil and trouble, and just sit at Jesus' feet.

Then, even as I wondered, I told the Lord
 my care,
 And soon to ease my burden came an
 answer to my prayer ;
 For my little four year's darling ran home
 from school one day,
 And he told me of his lessons in his
 happy, childish way ;
 Then he showed his book so proudly as,
 in triumphant glee,
 He cried, "Mamma, I've learned it; I can
 say my A, B, C."
 And I thought what patient plodding my
 little one had done,

Each day his task repeating until success
 was won.

Then I knew those irksome duties which
 my Lord required of me

Were just the simple learning of the
 heavenly "A, B, C."

And since 'tis He ordains it, I will seek
 for grace to be

Content to learn my lesson till I know it
 perfectly.

Nor ever grow impatient though distaste-
 ful be my task,

Assured my heavenly Teacher can supply
 the strength I ask.

A. B. S.

BOYS AND GIRLS.



HOW PRINCE WON THE PRIZE.

"PULL hard, Alf! Now, Minnie, run
 —run for your life! We'll hold

him as long as we can; but be quick, for
 it's hard work."

The girl addressed as Minnie did not
 wait to be told twice. She was terrified,
 frightened nearly out of her senses; and
 as she ran across the common she could
 scarcely see her way, for the tears blinded
 her. Every now and again she turned
 round to see if the boys were still holding
 back the big dog, or if it were once more
 chasing her.

The boys watched her until she was out
 of hearing, then one turned to the other
 with a laugh.

"She'll be sorry she told tales of me,"
 he said, gruffly; "perhaps she will hold
 her tongue next time. Let her get on a
 little way, Alf, then send Prince after her
 again."

"But we'd better not hurt her," said
 the other.

"We sha'n't hurt her," said the first.
 "Prince wouldn't hurt a baby; he is only
 playing, and I mean to give her a fright
 to punish her."

Meantime, Minnie, trembling, sobbing,

and crying, was hurrying across the common. Again she turned round, and, to her horror, saw that the dog was coming after her. She did not know that it was only playing, and quite believed she would be killed. Tired out, she stumbled and fell, just as the big dog came tumbling over her. She buried her face in the grass, and covered up her ears.

It seemed to her as if hours passed, then at last she realized that some one was speaking to her, and recognized Paul Bannister's voice.

Paul Bannister was Prince's master. He was a kind, gentle boy; not a bully and a coward, like his brother Robert. He had seen Prince bounding after Minnie and had at first thought they were playing; but when he saw his brother and Alfred Buxton holding the dog, and heard Minnie scream, he knew it was cruel fun, and had run to the rescue.

When Minnie looked up, Prince was standing quietly by his master, and the other boys had disappeared.

Paul comforted Minnie, and Prince gave her a paw and licked her hand, and later on in the day thrashed the boys.

Then he thought the matter was settled, but Robert was not of the same opinion. One morning, a fortnight later, when Paul went into the neighboring town to market, he saw a bill announcing that a dog-show would be held the following week. He determined at once to take Prince to it, and though he said nothing about it to any one but Minnie, he spent all his spare time in attending to the dog. Indeed, during the next week Prince was most carefully washed, brushed, and combed very much more than he liked.

The eventful day arrived; and Paul, having borrowed a cart from a neighbor, went to the stable in which he had shut Prince up after his bath, to fetch the dog.

He was rather late, as he had been busy in the field all the morning; so he unlocked the door, called to the dog, and then ran back to the cart, expecting the dog to follow. To his surprise, however, no dog appeared. He called again—ran back to the stable and called there—no dog was to be seen.

Paul began to think something was wrong. He fastened up his horse, and ran into the house. Robert was lying on

the window-seat, looking perfectly happy and comfortable.

"Robert, have you seen Prince lately?" asked Paul, abruptly.

Robert smiled. "To be sure I have," he said; "I saw him being led into captivity this very morning, decorated with a blue bow."

He did not think it necessary to mention that that same blue bow was now in his pocket.

"Have you seen him since?" asked Paul.

Robert made no answer. Paul walked hastily up to him, laid his hand on his shoulder, and repeated his question.

"Well, if you will know, I have," said Robert. "I saw him two hours ago, on the top of Hernshall Moor, staring stupidly at two wood-pigeons that were flying about."

Paul turned very white.

"And did you take him there? Did you take him, when you knew I wanted him for the show this afternoon?"

"Is there a show?" said Robert, lazily. "You never mentioned it."

Paul raised his arm.

"But I didn't take him there," added Robert, hastily; "he was following father. Father took him out."

"And you knew I wanted him, and let father take him. You knew all about the show, though I didn't tell you." Paul took no notice, but turned on his heel and left the room.

In the evening Mr. Bannister returned, but without the dog.

Robert ran to find Paul, and break the bad news to him. He found him lying on the floor in his own room, his face buried in his hands.

"Paul," said Robert, softly, "Paul, I fear Prince is lost. I'm so sorry. Father sent him home early this afternoon, he says, but he's never come. I'm afraid it's my fault, and I really am sorry."

Paul jumped up, brushed his coat-sleeve across his eyes, and said, roughly—

"It's no use being sorry now; we *must* find him, Robert. Come and help."

It was very nearly dark, and pouring with rain, but Paul took no heed, and ran out-of-doors, followed by Robert. They said nothing, but both boys felt how hopeless it was to begin a search then.

Paul looked down the road. Through

the mist and rain he could see something moving toward them.

As it came nearer they saw it was a dog—a miserable, wet, wretched dog.

"It's not Prince," said Paul, sadly.

But there was a short, sharp bark, a bound, a rush, and then Paul gave a cry of joy. It was Prince after all!

Both boys were so busy with the dog, that they did not notice that something else was coming down the road, and *this* something proved to be a very wet girl holding a still wetter piece of paper in her hand. This was Minnie—Minnie, who had known all about the dog-show, and who, when she had met Prince on the moor early in the afternoon, had guessed something was wrong. Out of gratitude to Paul she determined to get the dog to the show, and had persuaded a farmer to give her and the dog a ride.

Coming back, however, she had not been as fortunate, and had had to walk all the way. She was wet through; but in spite of that she was very happy, and it was with a very bright smile that she looked up at Paul, and handed him the damp piece of paper.

Paul looked at her and the dog, and smiled back, then looked at the paper, and shouted, "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" at the top of his voice. Why was he so pleased? Because on that piece of paper this was printed in big letters—

HERNSHALL DOG-SHOW.

FIRST PRIZE.

PAUL BANNISTER'S PRINCE.

MAGGIE BROWNE.

OUR BOATING ADVENTURE.

YES, it was a real adventure, and to tell the story of it I must begin at the beginning—that is, with the weather; just as grown-up strangers do when they first meet, and do not know what else to talk about.

Our home was in a valley with wooded hills all round, and in winter-time we were often cut off from every other place by snow or floods, like Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, only there were plenty of us to keep each other company. So far, then, from minding these things,

we thought them rather fun, and looked on such freaks of the weather as a pleasant little change got up for our special benefit. The elders, on the contrary, grew very fidgety, as morning after morning dawned, showing a wide waste of untrodden snow that came up to the dining-room windows, for father thought of his horses, mother feared the coal might be running short, or the provisions might fail; in short, there was no end to the anxieties about which our thoughtless young heads never troubled in the least.

One day the sky looked like lead. Mother shook her head, with a serious face, and said: "Well, if we get any more we shall be regularly snowed up, and that'll be as bad as a siege. Dear, dear, how tiresome it is."

But toward the afternoon, the wind changed suddenly to the southwest, and, instead of more snowflakes, a steady rain began to fall, which went on all that evening, so that when night came, our parents' fears were turned into another channel.

"A regular thaw, depend upon it," said father; "and, if it goes on like this much longer, we shall have a flood. That's the worst of living in such a hole as this valley, for if the house was on rising ground we need never be in such difficulties."

"Is a flood very bad?" asked Dickie, pausing in the midst of the gingerbread he was nibbling. "Will any one be drowned in it?"

"I hope not, but there's no saying. We may all have to go out in boats to church, Dick. What do you think of that?" And father laughed as he spoke, for, however bad things were, he had always a merry word and a smiling face for us children.

We were sitting in a circle round the fire when this was said, and Harry was there too, though he ought, by rights, to have been back at school; but measles had broken out, so he was kept at home, and did lessons with us in the school-room, much to the disgust of poor Miss Brown, who never could manage Harry at the best of times, because he was what she called "a trying child." Perhaps, thanks to father's chance words about going to church in a boat, perhaps, thanks to Harry's own invention, he began there and then to brood over a plan which he confided to nobody, even Polly, till it was nearly ripe for execution.

Next day we were all at lessons up-stairs under Miss Brown's care, deep in sums and history, when a strange, rushing noise, above the whistling of the wind and the patter of the rain, made us look toward the great window at the end of the room. The window was high, wide, and very draughty, for, like everything in the house, it was old, and the leads that latticed it into innumerable small, square panes were either bent or regularly worn away, leaving many a slit for ventilation. But this did not interfere with the view up the valley, to where the hills narrowed into a funnel-shape, leaving a high, narrow slip of woodland between them. And what a sight met our eyes when, casting away for awhile all thoughts of lessons, we scrambled on to the window-seat without even a word of remonstrance from Miss Brown, who felt as curious about that rushing noise as ourselves. A brown wall of water—so it seemed to our astonished gaze—was coming swiftly along toward the house; in fact, before we could vent our surprise in words, the wave had swirled round the trunk of the elm on the back lawn, swept over the drive, and on toward the other side of the house, leaving on our side a surging sea of muddy water some four or five feet deep.

Discipline, of course, was at an end in the school-room, for who could think of lessons in the face of such a disaster, such an unlooked-for event as this? and away we went helter-skelter to watch the progress of the flood from various windows.

Meanwhile there were shrieks from the kitchen, and cook, who was tying up the pudding for dinner, jumped nimbly on to the nearest chair, the scullery-maid fled to the back stairs, the cat skipped to the dresser, and the dog, in trying to follow such a good example, sent a badly-balanced pile of plates to the floor. Scatter, clatter! Troubles never come singly, and nobody for a time could think of anything except this unwelcome visitor, this watery invader, that swept across the floor and into the yard beyond, drenching, of course, everything on the way.

Father said it was the bursting of a waterspout up the valley, a thing that rarely happened more than once or twice in a lifetime, and mother was in despair when by and by she found out all the mischief it had caused.

The cottagers suffered worst of all, for buckets, house-flannels, tins, and many small pieces of furniture were washed clean away by the rush of water, to say nothing of the ruin of their carpets or clothes. For days after missing odds-and-ends were picked up as the flood subsided, and it was sad to see the poor folks paddling about in the hope of reclaiming their damaged property.

There's an old saying that it's an ill wind if it blows nobody any good, and bad though it was for most people who grumbled about this flood, Harry chuckled in secret, because it favored his plan, which, in a burst of confidence, he told Polly. It was the very evening after what to us was quite an event, and in an idle half-hour before tea, while chattering together by the school-room fire, the boy drew a little closer to his sister, and mysteriously lowered his voice.

"I say, Poll, do you remember what father said the other night about going to church in a boat if the rain went on?"

"Ye—es. Why."

"Well I thought whether it went on or not, the ha-ha would be a famous place for a sail, because there's lots of water in it, and no one could see us the other side of the wall."

It should here, perhaps, be explained that the ha-ha was a moat, flanked on one side by a wall which bounded an old bowling-green (known in modern times as "the front lawn"), and at the further end it was crossed by a drawbridge. Beyond this drawbridge was a sudden fall of several feet into a pool half hidden by a shrubbery, and a dangerous place it was, for the sloping grass edges on the two outer sides were slippery; besides, the water was of some depth, especially after rain.

Polly started and stared at her brother, whose face, in the flickering light of the red flames, wore a most determined expression.

"But, Harry, we've got no boat, and you don't know how to make one; and, if you did, how could you get the things?"

"Oh! nonsense," growled the other; "you girls are so stupid! There, I'd better not tell you any more about it, for you'd be sure to let it out too soon; or turn coward, perhaps, just at last; and I thought it would be such fun."

Polly melted at once; firstly, because she always felt proud to be honored with her elder brother's confidence; secondly, because she wanted to hear the rest, but not at all because she looked forward to the adventure with pleasure.

"Don't be cross, Harry; of course it will be great fun, and I'll hold my tongue about it; only how shall you manage?"

"A fellow at school taught me how to make a boat," said he, thrusting a stick between the bars of the fireplace by way of occupation for ten idle fingers, "so I know how to do that. I bought some nails long ago. There's plenty of wood lying about in the carpenter's shed, and I'll beg, borrow, or steal some from Joe Harris when he's at work there to-morrow. You just keep quiet for a few days, and then won't we enjoy ourselves, that's all!"

"I hope so," replied Polly, doubtfully, and she watched Harry with a solemn countenance, while, in the absence of the authorities, he enjoyed a few fireworks on a small scale, beginning with what he called a Catherine-wheel. This was nothing more than a twirling of the stick when one end of it was blazing and crackling in a way that satisfied the performer's wishes, and the end of the fireworks soon came when a round, black hole had been burnt in the hearthrug.

It is of no use to defend Harry, for he was a very naughty boy, and poor Miss Brown got quite tired of inventing new punishments for him. Mother scolded, father whipped, the servants complained, Harry always said he was sorry, and was just as bad soon after, and yet I don't think he ever did things that to my mind are downright wicked. He would never tell a lie, or do a nasty mean thing, and though he teased all of us younger children, we never thought him really cruel.

Well, day after day went by, and nothing happened. Polly began to think, and if truth must be told, to hope, that the boating idea had faded from Harry's mind. Saturday afternoon was always a half-holiday, and if any deeds of daring were to be performed, that was the time to expect them; so Polly did not begin to breathe freely till Saturday's plans were settled among the holiday-makers. The

children's dinner was rather an uproarious meal when no visitors were present, for, especially during the interval between mutton and pudding, the youngsters were allowed to use their tongues pretty freely. Mother always knew when to check these tongues, and directly their owners heard the rap of a knife-handle on the table there was a lull in the noise, for mother was as good in keeping up discipline as the officer of a small army!

On this occasion Polly was lingering over the tempting remains of an apple-dumpling, when she felt a decided and not very gentle kick under the table. Stifling a natural impulse to retort in kind, or to cry out, she glanced at her neighbor round the corner, to whom, something told her, she was indebted for this little attention, and there sat Harry demurely watching her while he munched a piece of cake with a most innocent air. Further up the table chatter was in full swing. This, then, was a famous opportunity to give, unnoticed, a bit of confidence, and bending forward over his cake, as if absorbed in picking out a plum therein, he muttered the one word, "Ready."

"All right," said Polly, nodding back, after a swift glance round to see if the word had caught any one else's ear besides her own, and she finished up the dumpling in much excitement, for Harry's secret was growing rather burdensome, and now that a climax had really come, she hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry.

A few minutes later every one dispersed, and the would-be captain of the new ship caught hold of his sister's apron just as she was whisking away up-stairs.

"Get out the back way," said he, in a stage whisper, "and come along to the beech tree. I've hidden the boat in the laurels, but quite forgot all about the oars, so I must go and fetch them. Make haste, don't make a noise, don't be caught, and I'll soon join you." Then, without pausing for question or remonstrance, the speaker darted off.

"It's rather mean of him," thought the little girl, "to leave me like that." "Harry, Harry!" she shouted, as a new idea suddenly struck her, "if Miss Brown sees me she's sure to stop me; and you know I can hardly get by the school-room

without her catching me, because the door is always open."

The boy stopped short. "Oh! bother," he exclaimed. "Wait a minute, and I'll fetch you one of my old hats, without your having to go near the nursery at all."

"But I shall be so cold, Harry."

"Then you shall have my coat, too, and my comforter."

So Polly waited shivering on the stairs, her last straw of hope that she might get out of this dangerous voyage down the ha-ha taken away. Charlie was at school, Dickie and baby had toddled away to the drawing-room for a few minutes of bliss with mother, an elder sister and the governess were safely out of sight, and all the servants were at dinner. In short, the coast was clear, and poor Polly gulped down her fears, feeling half ashamed of them in the face of such an honor as an adventure shared only by that most daring of school-boys, Harry. His hurrying feet were soon heard again in the passage, and in less time than it takes to write, he appeared, breathless and laughing, as he held up the promised garments for his sister. What mattered it that the coat was scarce of buttons, that the straw hat was battered, discolored, and torn? Both had seen their best days, and this was destined to be their last appearance in public; a possible fact neither of the children thought about when they fled on tip-toe along the flagged passage near the kitchen, and thence out of the back-door.

Once in the open air both breathed more freely, and taking to their heels they rushed rather than ran across yard and garden, keeping as far as possible from, and out of sight of, the house, since "conscience makes cowards of us all."

The beech mentioned by Harry was an old wide-spreading tree in one corner of the garden, a tree in which we had all learnt to climb, where a swing hung in summer, and under whose shade we occasionally did lessons. When this safe shelter was reached, the panting pair paused, and Harry ran off to fetch his oars, which, it must be confessed, were nothing more than a couple of pea-sticks borrowed from the gardener's shed. Meanwhile Polly inspected the boat in its hiding-place just above the water, and she stood aghast, for it was, instead of the boat her fancy had

pictured (on the model of one in her scrap-book), very like a badly-made pig's trough, with pieces of wood roughly nailed across the ends.

Comment now was useless, remonstrance came too late, and when Harry reappeared in triumph, dragging his pea-sticks over the wet slope of lawn, his fellow-sailor only turned upon him a very pale and piteous countenance. The boy's heart a little misgave him at the sight, but he turned his back, gave no signs of having noticed anything, and used a good deal of unnecessary energy in the launching of the frail craft, which he moored by a bit of rope to a laurel branch before trusting it to the mercy of that now rushing, foaming, muddy stream, or rather torrent.

"We shall go along at a splendid pace," he remarked, cheerfully, as he swung over the wall. "Come on! make haste! I'll help you in."

"O Harry! I don't see where my legs are to go!" cried the little girl, in a doleful tone, and she stood inwardly quaking above her brother.

"You'll feel," was the abrupt answer.

So, finding there was no help for it, Polly put one hand into Harry's, and with the other grasped the thyme and turf-trimmed edge of the wall that she might lower herself gently into the boat. Before actually getting in, a gleam of hope came into her heart, for her name was shouted in the distance, and there was no mistaking Miss Brown's shrill treble. Polly paused. Harry was desperate, and knew indecision must mean defeat.

"Let her call," said he. "You can't get up again with your legs more than half-way into the water," and sure enough, a pull destroyed her balance altogether, so she subsided into the boat, which rocked dangerously under the sudden entrance of this new burden. "Now then, off we go!" cried the captain, and they did indeed, faster than Harry ever wished, expected, or intended.

The oars were no more use than a couple of straws, such was the force of the current. Polly dropped hers directly, and even her companion grasped the sides of his vessel, while the two exchanged a horror-struck glance, for it flashed into Harry's mind that if nothing could stop them before, they must go under the

drawbridge down into the pool beyond, and that might mean drowning! Oh! how the boy repented of the adventure in a moment of agony following the thought! and it must be owned the repentance was at least three parts on his sister's account, for Harry was neither selfish nor cowardly by nature.

Every one has a guardian angel whom God sets to watch over him or her; and when the two children were hurrying into a great danger that memorable day, their angels must certainly have guided the boat against the big stone which settled its fate within barely three feet of the wooden drawbridge. Bump, creak, went the badly-nailed boards against the boulder, and Polly could not restrain a little shriek of dismay.

"Harry! Harry! my legs are so cold!"

"Don't be frightened!" he answered, soothingly, and flung an arm round her waist just before the boat tipped over, leaving both children to struggle out of the water as best they could, while it danced mockingly on, bottom upwards, till it disappeared into the pool.

Luckily the stream, though narrow, was not very deep, and Harry, being a strong little fellow, fought his way bravely out, dragging Polly up the steep, slippery bank on the other side, where they stood panting in silence, feeling half dazed by the greatness of the disaster.

Polly was too miserable to cry. She had been frightened out of her wits, felt chilled to the bone, and her wet clothes clung so tightly round her shaking little

body that she found it difficult to walk. But Harry's feelings were less enviable, because conscience told him the blame rested entirely on his shoulders, to say nothing of present discomfort and future punishment.

The children were so engrossed that they never once thought of the fact that they were standing opposite the drawing-room windows, or of the possible fact that mother might be a spectator at one of them. Yet such was the case, and her feelings may be better imagined than described when she saw a couple of small, dripping figures, emerge from the ha-ha at the other end of the wide bowling-green.

"You go on, Harry," said the other shipwrecked sailor in a mournful tone; "my things are so heavy and sticky I can't run."

"Nonsense!" he answered gruffly; "do you think I'd be mean enough to go without you? Here, catch hold of my hand, and I'll help you along."

He was as good as his word, and Polly did her best, but with a humiliating feeling that the best was bad, and that her slowness increased the danger of discovery. This had overtaken them already, and hardly were the children in sight of the back-door when mother came out to meet them with a frightened face, but with no reproaches, feeling sure that they had had punishment enough for their naughtiness.

Harry assured his mother, with tears of penitence that he would never take Polly or any one else for a sail down the ha-ha.

HOUSEKEEPERS.

COOKING FOR CONVALESCENTS.

IN our household we have agreed "*not to ask our invalid what he would relish.*"

Indeed, we do not talk very much about food in his presence, but at regular intervals we spread the small round table near his chair with the whitest cloth at command, and try to surprise him each meal with something not expected, and served in our thinnest and prettiest china.

For some days all fruit was denied him; he had grown to almost loathe milk, yet relished it when used in attractive forms.

Though disliking plain rice, he did not tire of

RICE WITH COCOANUT.—Wash and pick clean, four tablespoonfuls rice, boil tender in clear soft water enough to cover it; salt a very little. Heat almost to boiling point one pint milk, pour over the rice the milk, stir in one tablespoonful sugar, and two tablespoonfuls grated cocoanut and serve in a dainty bowl.

STRAWBERRY CREAM.—Whip to a stiff froth the white of one fresh egg, heat to boiling point one-half pint new milk, then stir in the whipped white of egg and cool. Just before serving, stir in six drops strawberry syrup.

TAPIOCA WITH VANILLA CREAM.—Soak over night, four tablespoonfuls tapioca, then boil until thick, and pour into a bowl. Into half-pint new milk, stir in one level teaspoonful corn-starch and one tablespoonful sugar, add one-half teaspoonful vanilla, pour over the tapioca and serve.

OAT-MEAL CRACKER TOAST.—Toast half-dozen oat-meal crackers, nicely spread with fresh, sweet butter. Have ready to pour over them one-half pint hot, sweet milk, in which three tablespoonfuls of

oyster liquor has been boiled; pepper, salt, and serve hot.

FRIED OAT-MEAL MUSH.—Slice thin and even cold oat-meal mush, dip into the yolk of a well-beaten egg, and fry in hot lard.

OAT-MEAL CRACKER DESSERT.—Heat in the oven half-dozen fresh oat-meal crackers, arrange on a plate, and pour over them chocolate cream.

CHOCOLATE CREAM.—One pint new milk, two tablespoonfuls sugar, three teaspoonfuls corn-starch, and three teaspoonfuls melted chocolate.

MINCED SQUIRREL.—Boil until tender a young squirrel, in a little salted water. Remove all the bones, and mince fine. Pepper and salt, then warm in a spider with half-pint new milk.

A MUTTON RELISH.—Chop fine, lean, juicy mutton, salt and pepper to taste. Have in the frying-pan one pint good, fresh milk; when heated blood warm, put into it one-half pint minced mutton, and let all come to a good boil, then serve hot.

POTATO SNOW.—Cook until tender, in a little salted water, four large potatoes, then drain, and mash with a fork, taking care to beat up lightly, until all the lumps are out. Over this pour four tablespoonfuls cream, then serve.

MILK JELLY.—One pint new milk in which four teaspoonfuls corn-starch has been dissolved. Let it come to a boil, then add one tablespoonful sugar, grate nutmeg over it, let it cool before serving.

CRACKER SOUP.—Half-dozen large crackers broken into bits, crumbled into one quart of milk, a lump butter size of walnut, pepper and salt to taste, and four tablespoonfuls beef tea. Boil five minutes.

TOMATO PUDDING.—Boil four large, ripe tomatoes with two tablespoonfuls

sugar, one-quarter teaspoonful ginger, until the pulp is soft, then cool and strain.

For the pudding, mix very soft one cup milk, one teaspoonful baking powder, one teaspoonful butter, with flour sufficient to make soft dough, bake in a cake, split, and spread upon it the tomato filling.

THICKENED MILK.—One pint new milk, three teaspoonfuls flour smoothly stirred in, then boiled until the milk begins to thicken, is excellent for those suffering from bowel troubles.

PEPPER PORRIDGE.—One quart new milk, one-half teaspoonful butter, six teaspoonfuls flour wet smoothly in cold milk, then boil until thick, taking care not to scorch. Just before serving, sprinkle thick with black pepper.

SCRAPS.—Save in a clean dish the scraps of cold, light bread, biscuit, or corn bread. When stale and dry, crumb fine into a quart of boiling milk. When soft, stir in one teaspoonful butter, one-quarter teaspoonful each salt and grated nutmeg, and serve warm.

MILK WITH MUTTON BROTH.—Boil the mutton broth very low, until it is strong. Remove all the fat, pour half-pint of the mutton extract into one pint boiling milk, pepper and salt to taste, and serve with oat-meal crackers.

RICE WITH OYSTER SOUP.—Rice is offered eagerly eaten by the sick, if carefully boiled until tender, and not too strong oyster soup poured over the rice.

A MOCK PUDDING.—When a *real* pudding is craved, but not to be thought of for the invalid, arrange in a china sauce dish pieces of steamed stale bread. Sprinkle with sugar, then pour over a sauce composed of one pint cold, sweet milk, one teaspoonful sugar, and one teaspoonful lemon extract.

MILK WITH EGGS.—Boil one pint sweet milk, beat well one fresh egg, and season with salt and pepper, then stir into the boiling milk, and do not cook longer than one moment.

MINCED BEEF.—One-third pint finely minced raw beef, stirred into half-pint boiling milk is very nourishing and nice. Do not cook the beef too much.

ELLA GUERNSEY.

DINING-ROOM HINTS.

WHERE only one servant is kept it is oftentimes a great convenience to have very little table-waiting done, and such arrangements of furniture and table service as to do away with the necessity of keeping the servant in the room or of calling her frequently during a meal are very desirable.

A stand with shelves placed near the left of the mistress is a very useful piece of furniture for this purpose. The soup-plates are handed up to her, and by her placed on one of the shelves. If the tureen is in front of her it is also readily removed to the stand, and from these the vegetable dishes are substituted for it. The meats, if brought in smoking hot and kept covered, will rarely have cooled very greatly by the time the soup is finished. Some dishes, such as *entrees*, are readily kept hot on the stand over a dish of hot water.

The soiled plates are as easily passed down as if a second helping only were asked for. And if the suitable substitutes are already placed before the master and mistress, no delay or hitch need occur in the dinner passing off smoothly and in perfect order, as well as if a servant were on hand, and this without the mistress jumping up every few minutes as otherwise she might have to do. The stand should be large enough to hold all the dishes without crowding, and it should be high enough to have two or three shelves. It can be on rollers, and can easily be moved from place to place when not in use. If this contrivance is not quite so good as a trained waitress, it certainly has the advantage of being a "silent member" in the domestic economy, and moreover requires no wage beyond its first cost. It can be made as artistic as serviceable.

I have also heard of, but not seen, shelves, arranged under either end of the dining-room table, where extra dishes could be set when not in use. If firmly made, they might prove desirable.

The sideboard as an article of furniture almost presupposes a servant in its arrangements, useful as that article has been and is. But the stand and shelves are close at hand and easily managed.

In many city homes and some country ones as well, the library and dining-room

are now combined in one. Any such article which is movable and easily managed is a desirable thing inasmuch as a sideboard is not an artistic piece of furnishing in a library.

The fashion of the glass, silver, and fine china being washed by the mistress is coming up again. So many ladies of moderate means have delicate bits of table-ware they do not like to trust in the hands of any but an experienced and careful servant, they prefer having a dish-pan of hot water brought in after a meal together with a tray for draining, a dish-mop, soap, and a rack with towels. This is easily managed, and takes but a few minutes of time. Where there is a butler's pantry, the mistress uses that, if she likes it better than the table.

Ammonia in clean dish-water softens it and imparts to silver and glass a brightness soap does not. A great deal of glass-ware is now made, which, washed in ammonia and water, nearly equals in brilliance the finest cut-glass. It is cheap in price, and it gives the table a sparkle supposed to be obtained only at great expense.

Ferns in variety make an excellent background for the floral decoration of a table. If these are plentiful, the flowers can be made to show off well and to the best advantage, even if few in number. Scarlet begonias, trailing autumn vines, golden rods, asters, gentians, and roses are so plentiful usually at this time of the year in many localities, one need never be at a loss for fresh table decoration. The first and the last ones, of course, are cultivated, but they are easily raised and very common. Some flowers are obtainable by almost every one, and if properly arranged, without doubt the prettiest as well as the most simple table decoration in common use. The artificial ones of the dealers' are not to be compared for one instant with the genuine article, and people pay large prices for these oftentimes.

Bouillon is now served in small cups with handles, and quite hot. If any quantity is needed, it is kept hot in the urn over a spirit-lamp.

These articles are of silver or silver plate, and for large parties are usually furnished by the caterer or hired for the occasion, as one of small size suitable for

general household use holds but two or three quarts at the utmost, and usually a little less. Doilies were at first designed to save the scratching of the finger-bowl on the fine china plate on which it was placed. They are now so elaborately embroidered they have become about as valuable as the fine plates themselves. I think the finest needlework I have ever seen, without any exception, was a set of fine linen doilies embroidered with silk in imitation of fine sea-weeds. Common ones are bought by the dozen woven in small patterns, but many ladies like to either do a set for themselves or have them done by some friends. They are of fine linen about four inches square.

Peaches being a common dessert, it is well to bear in mind that fruit napkins of ecru color are not so liable to show stains as the white ones with borders; and peach stain, like grass spot, is not easily taken out of white.

In using catsup, it is very pretty and convenient to pour it from a small glass jug. These come in a variety of patterns with glass stoppers. They are very generally used for vinegar and oil, the cruet-stand either not appearing on the table at all, or else of much smaller size than formerly.

ON THE CARE OF KITCHEN UTENSILS.

ALL iron, granite-ware, copper or brass utensils clean readily if water is put into them as soon as they are emptied after being used, that is, unless fruit has been burned upon the bottoms of them. It is well if this catastrophe never happens, for not only are the fruit and sugar and labor lost, but the preserving kettle is apt to be ruined also. It can be scoured, of course, but the traces of the burn are apt to remain. And in the case of granite or porcelain ware, the glaze becomes cracked, and the kettle is soon worthless. Sea-sand, some soap or sapolio will usually take any slight burn from pots and kettle bottoms. New iron-ware should be filled with hay and water, and this boiled for some hours. A little soda and water should often be used to scald out all utensils used in cooking. It keeps them sweet and clean, and removes all bad odors. The outside of pots and kettles

and frying-pans need to be kept as clean as the inside, and this can be done only by washing both as often as necessary.

In filling lamps and kerosene stoves, a steady hand and clear eye are needful, else the oil gets spilled, causing a world of trouble for the time being. If it does overflow, however, nothing short of a vigorous scouring with soap, sand, and scrubbing-brush will remove the spots.

Iron sinks are preferable to wooden ones, as they cannot absorb anything which may be thrown into them. By flushing the drain-pipes daily with ammonia and water, or with copperas water, or even with soda dissolved in scalding water, they can be kept perfectly sweet. A rubber scraper and a little broom-brush to clean the sink with are great conveniences, but they in turn need to be washed clean.

Soft soap and good sea-sand, together with lye made from wood ashes, and vigorous applications with the scrubbing-brush are, in my way of thinking, the best implements with which to scour the floor and tables, and the woodwork of a room if it is unpainted. All paint requires a little more careful handling, and can be wiped down with woolen cloths wrung out of water in which a little soap or lye has been dissolved.

A small kitchen grindstone is most essential for use in keeping an edge on knives. The knives can be kept from rusting by oiling them when not in use. Rust can be removed by first oiling them, and, after a few hours, briskly rubbing the spot with powdered emery. Knives are cleaned by rubbing in bath-brick, sapolio, whites of ashes, or emery, or powdered charcoal, or any substance which scours lightly but does not scratch the surface to injure the steel. In washing knives, the blades should be put into a jug or pitcher, and scalding water poured about them without touching the handles. If the handles are constantly wetted they soon loosen and crack off. If they have loosened they can be cemented with rosin cement, and so made firm again. A piece of zinc firmly nailed to a board kept near the stove is very useful to set pots upon or the tea-kettle.

Old, loose crash towels, folded into several thicknesses, are very good holders

to use in baking. A dozen of them are none too many for constant use. They need washing, as do the dish-cloths and dish-towels, regularly and often.

Bottles and glassware can be cleaned with ammonia and water.

Tinware is best washed in soda and water. It can be scoured with care, yet, if kept clean from day to day, it seldom need come to scouring, which process wears it out quickly. The peppers, salts, vinegar cruets, and other bottles of supplies and condiments in constant use need regular replenishing, and the article containing each wiped off or washed.

There is no remedy for pie-plates or pudding dishes, or other ware which has become flossy and glaze-cracked, other than the hammer and the ash-heap.

A HOUSEKEEPING MELODY.

SING a song of cleaning house,
Pocketful of nails;
Four-and-twenty dustpans,
Scrubbing-brooms and pails,
When the door is opened,
Wife begins to sing:

"Just help me move this wardrobe here,
And hang this picture, won't you, dear?
And tack that carpet by the door,
And stretch this one a little more,
And drive this nail, and screw this screw;
And here's a job I have for you—
The cupboard door will never catch,
I think you'll have to fix the latch;
And, oh! while you're about it, John,
I wish you'd put the cornice on,
And hang this curtain: when you're done
I'll hand you up the other one;
This box has got to have a hinge
Before I can put on the fringe;
And won't you mend that broken chair?
I'd like a hook put right up there;
The wardrobe drawer must have a knob;
And here's another little job—
I really hate to ask you, dear.
But could you fix a bracket here?"

And on it goes, when these are through,
And this and that and those to do,
Ad infinitum, and more, too,
All in a merry jingle,
And isn't that enough to make
A man wish he was single? (Almost.)

NOTES FROM "HOME" HOUSEKEEPERS.

Well-tried recipes, helpful suggestions, and plain, practical "talks" on subjects of special interest to housekeepers will be welcome for this department, which we have reason to believe most of our readers will find interesting no less than useful. Our "HOME" friends will here have opportunities of assisting each other by giving timely and helpful replies and letters, and of asking information concerning any subject they wish light upon. All communications designed for this department should be addressed to the Editor "HOME" Housekeeper, P. O. Box 913, Philadelphia, Pa.

A TALISMAN TO USE IN TRAINING CHILDREN.

SO many young mothers are asking for help, in the various periodicals which monthly visit us, that I would like to say a few words to those who, in their perplexity and want of experience, seek aid. My experience has been a large one, and the best advice I can give to any in rearing little ones is, to give them freely, at all times and under all circumstances, that never-failing talisman of love, strong, pure, and true. Let them feel its influence from first to last, throughout your whole term of life with them. The "God of love" has bestowed such a bountiful supply of affection upon every motherly heart that she but gives what naturally is the right of her darlings, and which helps to make her noble, self-sacrificing, and unselfish; she teaches those so dear to her to prize at its true worth the heart's gold which may come to them, to feel the responsibility conferred by being the possessor of such a priceless treasure, and from babyhood to give to others generously and without stint, as freely as they have received—little by little helping them to master self, control hasty words and impetuous actions, to yield what they oft-times prize, thus learning how much more blessed it is to give than receive, rather

than to bestow what is of no value to them, or what, from losing its novelty, has ceased to please, and therefore in the giving taxes neither generosity nor self-denial.

Comparatively few realize how early children can be taught by example to become, in the highest sense of the word, little gentlemen and ladies, ever considerate of the feelings of others, respectful to parents and elders, courteous alike to equals and inferiors, truthful, honest, and upright, and yet veritable laughing, romping children, neither old in advance of time, nor affecting that precocity so unbecoming the sunny, happy years of childhood. Let me beseech mothers throughout the breadth of our land never to be afraid of showing how much they love their precious ones. To feel that your happiness is in their keeping, to make or mar, will arouse the best and most chivalrous feelings of their being, and fewer and fewer will become the occasions when they will grieve the heart always open and ready to help bear their childish sorrows and perplexities. Be ready, at all times, to sympathize and soothe, to receive confidences and plan surprises, their merriest play-fellow, unfailing adviser and comforter, but firm and unswerving in exacting what is right, passing by never so much as an untruthful word, disobedient action or disrespectful look, lest you sow the seed of trouble which will cost both you and those dearer far than yourself sorrow and toil unspeakable to eradicate.

There must of necessity arise occasions when discipline is essential. Be on the lookout to uproot, as far as may be, faults in the bud, and help in every possible way the tiny feet to steer clear of the worst pitfalls which they must surely encounter. Where disobedience and other

weighty faults of character cannot be ignored, use every gentle means within your power to win the erring one to right; but, if your efforts are all in vain, the time has arrived to test the full worth of the talismanic effect of love, both on mother and child. Do your duty bravely, and be very sure you will prove its value in the case of your little one. A mother is unworthy the name who shrinks from punishing a child because of the pain it entails on herself, and yet this, I fear, is the latent cause of so many children having to meet and battle with faults comparatively late in life, which should have been encountered and in a measure subdued whilst they were but of surface growth, compared to the depth now attained, and when, by his side, there was one ready and anxious to "guide the little feet aright," and meet his penitent, tearful look with one so full of the mighty power of love that he felt, for the time being, at least, how heinous was sin, and resolved to be both better and stronger if prayer to his Heavenly Father could accomplish this. Believe me, such resolve is in itself an attainment, and one which childish hearts are capable of—if we believe, as is asserted by Robertson, that "Nothing so quickly or perfectly develops character, as love."

I have already said much more than I intended, and have not, I fear, made nearly so good use of the space as I should; but, nevertheless, would be happy could I hope to influence even one young mother to prove the worth of the god-like power of deep, unalterable, never-varying affection, which has been of such avail to me that, to this day, tossed on the billows of life, oftentimes overwhelmed by the waves of sorrow and trouble, I still thank God that He enabled me to prove its depth and breadth in the rearing of those who are now prepared to give it the place of honor in the household discipline and nursery training which now awaits them. Be brave, and persevere in all that pertains to the good of your children, blessed, happy young mothers, and you will sooner or later have your reward in that "unborn children will arise and proclaim your worth."

A FRIEND.

[Thank you, we are sure that many of

the young mothers who read the "HOME" Magazine will appreciate and profit by your little talk to them.]

"A FEW HINTS."

DEAR "HOME" HOUSEKEEPERS:—I bring you a few hints to-day—hints which have been of such service to me that I cannot resist the temptation to share them with you all.

Sometimes, in the "heated term" don't you find yourself with a piece or pieces of meat on hand which, if you had apples, you would make into mince pies, just for a change? Try chopped pie-plant instead of apples; you cannot tell the difference.

If a pie boils over in the oven when you are baking, a handful of fine salt thrown on will stop the smoke. But the pie will never boil over if you insert that little tunnel of stiff paper in the top crust.

Rub butter over the tops of your bread loaves when taken from the oven. It will make the crust invariably moist and tender.

When baking griddle-cakes, rub the griddle with a turnip cut in two instead of greasing it. It does away with smoke, and the cakes tastes nicer.

Have a place in which to keep bits of flannel, pieces of old woolen stockings, mittens, etc., and when Tommy cuts his finger almost off, don't faint, but put some of the woolen bits on a shovelful of coals, place over it an inverted flower-pot or paper funnel, and have Tommy hold his finger over the thickest of the smoke until the blood thickens.

Then do up the cut, without washing, and see how little it will trouble him, and how quickly it will heal.

ZELMA.

HINTS FOR THE HOME.

Now that the hurry of our winter's sewing is over, we can begin to think of the new carpet we would like to have next summer. First, we will make a few strong sacks, with plain, printed labels sewed on them, as paste calls the mice; then, as we rip up the old garments, we will sort and place each bundle in its respective sack. Save the soft, fine, white muslin and long strips for sickness or accidents, and bits of mosquito netting for

covering mustard plasters; all the old flannel too tender for other use, lap and sew together until you have pieces large enough to cover a brick, tack together two or three thicknesses, and you will not have to use your breakfast shawl every time you have toothache or neuralgia. Have these things all together in your bedroom or other convenient place where every member of your family will know just where to find them.

When tearing rags for carpet, save all pieces that will do for patches or lining. Strips too coarse and heavy for carpet can be braided for rugs. Thick woolen pieces, dyed red or black, will make nice centres for rugs, or alternate stripes of the same may be sewed together. Let the children have a rag "bee" for an hour at a time every day, praising them for their work, and see how soon the most of your rags will be ready for the weaver.

If you are inexperienced in coloring, use only box-bluing for blue, four or five small boxes to three pounds of rags. For canary (four pounds of rags), one half-ounce of bichromate of potash, six ounces sugar of lead. For green, dip in sugar of lead, then in potash solution, then in the bluing. Never mix the dyes and color in tin or brass. Be careful in using the potash, as it will make the goods tender if the dye is too strong. For coloring woolen red, the Diamond or package dyes may be used, as the scarlet dye is beautiful and durable, except for cottons.

If you have no kitchen closet or shelves, get of your dry-goods merchant some of the boards used for wrapping nice cloths or embroidery on, stain with umber or asphaltum, bore gimlet holes in the corners of each, and hang by heavy cord covered with red calico, tying a knot under each shelf to prevent the cord slipping through. These shelves will hold the numberless small things required in every household—a bottle of glycerine, a small roll of soft muslin, a box of salve made of beeswax, resin, and mutton tallow, your needle-book, thread and scissors, memorandum and receipt books, etc.

Some day, when work is not pressing, cut out several garments; then, if your neighbors are inclined to be friendly, and drop in for a sociable evening visit, you

will not have to sit with folded hands because you have nothing ready to do.

AUNT HOPE.

THANKS AND SUGGESTIONS.

DEAR "HOME" NOTES:—I want to thank Sister Clara for her splendid fig-cake recipe, and to say that she makes her lemon pies just as I do, except that I never use the grated rind of lemon for anything. One day when I was in a hurry I did not stop to grate the rind, and we all liked the pie so much better that I have never used it since; it saves work, the pie is really nicer, and you haven't the grater to wash—which I think quite an item.

Thanks also to "California Cook" for her nice pudding recipe. I did not use the grated rind of lemon, as she says, but without it it is a delicious dessert. Made once you cannot resist making it again.

Sister Meg, wash your chamois skins in soft water, warm enough to put the hands in; use toilet soap, rinse in warm water, wring and dry quickly. They will turn yellow but will not harden up.

Mrs. Sedin asks for soft frosting; if she will look in October "Notes" I think she will find just what she wants. I will give her my recipe for sour frosting, which is very nice for angel cake: Juice of one lemon, one spoonful of water; stir into this enough confectioners' sugar to enable you to spread it nicely on the cake. It is always best to sift the sugar before using.

LEMON JELLY.—One-half box of gelatine, soaked for an hour in cold water enough to cover it, add one pint of boiling water, one and one-half cups of sugar, juice of four lemons; heat to the boiling point, then strain into mold or glasses and set in a cold place. It is nice for the sick, and looks pretty, if a few very thin slices of lemon are placed in the glass. Put a silver spoon in the glass when pouring in the hot jelly.

Will some one tell me what will cure cold sores, or will prevent their coming? and oblige,

E. A. C.

[Upon the first indication of cold blisters, moisten the lips with hamamelis, or witch-hazel, which is really an invaluable household remedy, repeating the opera-

tion frequently. Camphor and alcohol are said to be excellent for the purpose, though much more harsh. To prevent cold sores, the lips should be kept in good condition, rub them over with vaseline on retiring, or with a preparation of witch hazel and glycerine, which any druggist will put up for you, and which is also one of the best things imaginable to keep the hands smooth and prevent their chapping.]

SOME OF PRUDY'S NOTIONS.

DEAR EDITOR:—Whenever I happen upon anything I think will be of benefit to the "HOME" band, I like to jot it down. Of course we all know that a little turpentine in stove polish is a great advantage, but I didn't know until the other day that trying to polish a stove which has not been previously thoroughly washed is almost labor wasted. First, wash your stove with strong soapy water, to which is added a spoonful or two of kerosene, and see how much easier it will polish, and how much longer the polish will last on it.

Chamois skin makes the nicest sort of lining for the knees of children's stockings, which wear out so quickly there. In buying dresses which are expected to last a long time, I always provide enough material to replace the first pair of little sleeves with new ones; it takes but little cloth, and the dress will be presentable as long as it lasts, which it would hardly be if the sleeves were patched.

How many of you have noticed how much more easily and rapidly the housework moves along when you have something pleasant for your minds to rest upon while your hands are busy with the various duties which fall to the lot of the housekeeper? No matter how unimportant it may be, I think we all should have something to think about besides our rounds of daily duties. The "dull routine," with no end in view, no aim beyond the weekly system of "washing, baking, mending, making," will in time break the spirit of almost any woman. I do not mean that we are to despise our work, or try to shirk it in any way, but that we should lighten it with a little recreation. Good reading is so plentiful and cheap nowadays that a new book should often find its way to our shelves. We may not

all be Chautauquans, but we can all improve the chances we have for learning. I know a mother who studies her children's lessons with them—learning as they learn, and it is hard to say which is the more eager for the coming study-hour, they or she. Have a bit of inexpensive fancy work to do to aid in making the "home beautiful." If you like to write, have a pencil and paper at hand and jot down stray thoughts which may come to you. Preserve them, too—in years to come the pencilings by "mother's" hand may have a priceless value to the dear ones. Learn to paint; a box of water-colors is within the reach of almost any purse, and you cannot think how easily the art is acquired. You may not be a genius, but you will soon be able to prepare many a little memento, and will find the pastime most fascinating. Have some flowers—out and in-doors—the caring for them is a pleasure which none but those who have had them to care for can appreciate.

Speaking of flowers—can any one tell me about the "cinnamon vine?" whether or not it is hardy enough to remain in the ground through the winter, or should the bulbs be taken up?

PRUDY.

[Floral authorities seem to differ on this question. A lady living in Maine, however, where the winters are unusually long and severe, says that the vine is perfectly hardy, and does not need to be taken up, though it may be covered with boughs or litter. It is tardy about starting up in the spring, but is a very rapid grower.]

"HOME" RECIPES.

DEAR EDITOR:—I think M. A. J., who in the December number asks for a recipe for sweet-potato pie, means the dish which we in the South call custard; but for fear this is not what she wants, I inclose three dishes to be made of sweet potatoes:

SLICED SWEET-POTATO PIE.—Bake your potatoes, slice them, use for your pie a round pan two or three inches deep, put in a layer of potatoes, then a sprinkling of sugar and allspice; continue this until you fill your pan; add about a table-spoonful of butter, in which a small quantity of flour is mixed, to thicken the gravy a little, then water, so that there

will be plenty of juice or gravy. Bake until done.

POTATO PONE (OR PUDDING).—Grate raw potatoes—one quart; pour over this one pint of boiling water, add two or three eggs (more will do no harm), one teacup of sweet milk, three tablespoonfuls of flour, allspice (or any other spice you like), and sugar to your taste—we like them pretty sweet. Pour the mixture in a pan, without a crust, and bake well; you can turn it out like a cake if made right, and it will keep some time.

SWEET POTATO CUSTARD.—Boil the potatoes until soft, rub them through a sieve; to one quart of potato add four or six eggs, one cup of sweet milk, allspice, ginger and sugar to your taste, being sure to get them sweet enough. Bake in a crust as you do lemon pie. These custards are the best things made of sweet potatoes. Irish potato custards made in this way are also nice.

Here is another tested recipe which I know all the members of our "HOME" band will like after once trying it—an old Southern recipe for

NEW ORLEANS PUDDING.—Three cups of sifted flour, one of molasses, one of suet, chopped fine, one of water, one of raisins, one of currants or other fruit (dried peaches or apples are good), one teaspoonful each of cloves, cinnamon, and mace, or nutmeg, and one teaspoonful of soda, stirred in after everything else is mixed. Put the pudding in a deep cake-pan and set it in the steamer (or in a bag and lay in the steamer), and steam three or four hours. Butter and sugar stirred till light and white, and flavored with nutmeg, is a nice sauce; or, if you have it, sweetened cream flavored with fruit juice is good.

DISCIE.

NOTELETS.

DEAR EDITOR:—I am much interested in the "NOTES FROM 'HOME' HOUSEKEEPERS," finding therein many useful suggestions; some, however, have more

than once expressed a wish that friends would write about their flowers; both indoors or out, giving experience and methods of culture. We all need to learn all we can about the beautiful flowers that help to make our homes and the world more enjoyable. If any of the sisters of the "HOME" circle would like me to send them some flower seeds, I will do so if they will write me and inclose postage.

MRS. GEORGE CLARKE.

Box 76, Sycamore, De Kalb Co., Ill.

[In making this generous offer, we are afraid you do not fully realize how large a circle you are addressing. We know, however, that all will appreciate the kindly spirit which prompts it. Floral notes from our housekeepers will be gladly received.]

EDITOR "HOME" HOUSEKEEPER:—If Mrs. A. C. Ward will add glycerine to her home-made mucilage, it will keep for years without spoiling. Two drachms of glycerine to the ounce would probably be sufficient.

J. M. K.

I would like to suggest to Mrs. L. F. P. that her banana cake would be delicious if she would use boiled custard instead of frosting, also oranges with the custard instead of bananas—the pulp, of course, without the seeds. The custard is to be cool when put on, so it will not moisten the cake.

When baking pumpkin pies, I find that a heaping tablespoonful of flour beaten thoroughly with enough pumpkin and sugar for one pie will render the use of eggs unnecessary, and be equally good. The beating before the milk is added renders them light. I find many valuable suggestions in the "Notes," and may occasionally add my mite.

MRS. G. A. W.

[Do so, by all means. These helpful "mites" from pens of real housekeepers are just what we want to give in "NOTES FROM HOME HOUSEKEEPERS."—ED.]

BABYLAND.

BABY'S ASTRONOMY.

ONE night, my little Daisy
Was walking home with me,
When looking through the tree-tops,
What did her bright eyes see
But a slender, silver crescent,
'Twas the first time she had seen
Such a *little* moon, so narrow
Had her walks with Wisdom been.

The moon of her acquaintance,
Was a monstrous moon, full-grown,
A jolly, round-faced fellow,
That for many months she'd known,
Quite like a great big orange,
Hung up there in the tree;
While this was but a quarter
Of that orange, don't you see?

Her dainty head was tilted back,
Her eyes with wonder shone,
A new thing for the baby mind,
This new moon, not half-grown.
The problem proved an easy one,
She solved it at the start.
"O mamma! see, up in the sky,
The moon's all com'd apart!"

HATTIE F. BELL.

A TRUE STORY.

ONCE knew a dear little baby, who came to live upon this earth at such a funny time that she only could have a birthday once in four years. Do you know how that could be? Now, you have one every year, don't you?—the most of you do, anyway—and you think it is very nice to have your birthday coming around so often, because very likely you get presents, and maybe have a party, and invite your little friends. Yes, most of you think birthdays are very fine things to have, but this little girl I'm telling you about, had only one in four whole long years. She

was first as happy as any other little girl, and grew just as fast, and got to be a big girl just as quick, for she is nearly sixteen now, but she has had only three birthdays in all her life. Can you tell how that can be? Ask mamma or teacher, and see what she will tell you. That wasn't the only funny thing about this baby, either, coming to live in this world in such a queer time, where the days and months and years are so busy and blustering, and in such a hurry they can't stop to let her have a birthday only once in a while; she was, aside from this, a "funny baby," everybody said. In the first place, she had a funny name her papa called her—her real name was Grace, but her papa called her—oh! I'll have to tell you, you'll never guess it, if you keep trying till you are as old and wrinkled as grandma. He called her "Obbie Dobbie." Now, don't you think that funny? Maybe you've read that little poem with this title, and didn't think 'twas a really, truly baby, but it was, and I knew her. She used to say funny things too. One day the Sabbath school had a picnic, and little Gracie went with her papa and mamma. It so turned out they had to ride in an open buggy; the wind was very strong and rough that day, and it blew in her face, and made her fat cheeks as red as two roses, and her yellow curls twirl about, as if they would like nothing better than to break loose and fly away; in fact, it was such a romping, saucy wind it almost took away little "Obbie Dobbie's" breath, and I guess it was true that she "didn't have very much of a pretty good time, after all." Always after that she insisted on calling every buggy without a top a "windy wagon."

"Obbie Dobbie" is a grown-up young lady now, almost, but she is just as funny as ever, and still has the name of being a "very original girl."

HATTIE F. BELL.

THE MARCH WINDS.

WHAT are the March winds crying?
Over the hills they blow.
Bearing from cold, north regions
The blustering, beautiful snow,
Piling it high in the valleys
Where the violets used to grow.

Thrumming a tune on the window,
To the joy in his merry eyes,
Charlie watches the snow-flakes
Flutter and fall and rise.
"Get your sled with the shining runners,"
That's what the March wind cries.

"DOROTHY."

PAPA called her Darling, and mamma, Dolly, but grandmother called her Dorothy, and when the little girl was asked her name, she always said "I am Dorothy Westings, I am."

"Where's Darling?" inquired papa, looking up from his paper and glancing all around the sitting-room. "I haven't seen her to-day."

Grandmother was so busy with her knitting she didn't seem to hear.

Presently mamma came running in with a small basket of fruit. "See what I have!" she cried, holding up a bunch of grapes—"why Dolly isn't here!"

Two blue eyes peeped cautiously out from behind grandmother's chair, but just as cautiously retreated.

"Where is the child?" again inquired papa, and went to one of the long windows, and called "Darling! Darling! Darling!"

Then mamma ran to the other window and called "Dolly! Dolly! Dolly!"

"Why don't you call our little girl by her proper name?" suggested grandmother. "Maybe she'd come if you would."

Mamma turned to papa and made a wry little face, but papa laughed softly, and tried again.

"Dorothy!"

No need to call any more. A small, curly head bobbed out from its hiding-place, and a very innocent voice answered "Does you want me, papa?"

Mamma laughed merrily, and said her Dolly's proper name was "Little Rogue."

HOME DECORATION AND FANCY NEEDLEWORK.

HOW TO PAINT WITH DYE-COLORS

DYE-COLORS are now largely used to decorate fabrics, as lace, bolting-cloth, etc. They are better than oil-colors for the purpose, as oil-colors clog up the threads of the material, while dye-colors unite with them and form part of the fabric itself.

The popular practice now is to paint leaves and petals of flowers with dye-colors, and then bring out the outlines, veins, stems, etc., in silk or tinsel embroidery. Particularly is this the case when bolting-cloth is the material employed. It is then customary to lay under the bolting-cloth a sheet of satin of the same shade as the petals. Yellow, of a

real golden tint, underyellow nasturtiums or corn-flowers, looks particularly well.

The centre of large leaves on linen may also be filled in with dye-colors. Then the edges may be worked in a semi-solid satin stitch of various colored silks, forming a broad outline. Lace is particularly adapted for decoration with dye-colors. It may be used for frills to border pin-cushions or chair-scarfs, whose principal decorations are in the same colors.

Those who wish to attempt something more elaborate, may purchase the soft textile canvases manufactured for the purpose, and copy the pictures from old tapestries. This was the original use of dye-colors—strictly speaking, the art is called tapestry-painting. But it is too tedious

and expensive, in its more ambitious form, for many amateurs to attempt.

Dye-colors, when purchased in sets, are quite costly, ranging in price from six to eight dollars. But one or two colors may be procured at the rate of from twenty to forty cents per bottle—for ordinary purposes, these will be sufficient. The colors come in bottles, like ink. Before using they should be diluted in little cups. A liquid called a medium, comes for the purpose of diluting. This, before using, is itself mixed with warm water in the proportion of about one spoonful of medium to four ounces of water. The brushes used are of bristle, cut down very close to the handle.

Dye-colors are laid on in broad washes like water-colors. As much as possible of the work should be done at one sitting. The mixture of medium and water should be frequently spread over the surface, for blending, as in water-colors. Touching-up, etc., may be done according to taste.

When dry, the colors are to be fixed by steam. The dyer can do this for you better than you can, by exposing the work to steam for an hour. But if you cannot send the work to a dyer's, steam it at home. Lay it face upward on a damp cloth; then lay a piece of muslin on top of it, and run over the muslin with a moderately hot iron.

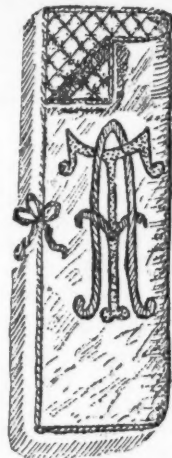
M. B. H.

NOVELTIES IN NEEDLEWORK FOR GENTLEMEN.

THE newest sachets I have seen are made of thick watered silk (the latest foundation for fancy-work, and one which seems likely to become very popular). There was nothing especially novel in the shapes, which were simply squares having the four points fastened in the centre with two large buttons. One composed of very dark bronze and pale-blue watered silks (a charming combination of color) had a small design worked entirely in silks of golden-brown shades and gold thread, and was bordered with a silken fringe in which the same shades of pale-blue and bronze were blended. Another in the same style was made of dark-red and old-gold, and in this case the silk was shot as well as watered.

Necktie-cases are not at all difficult to

make, especially those which are arranged in exactly the same manner as glove



NECKTIE CASE.

sachets. All that is necessary for these is to ornament a piece of plush or silk with any style of work preferred, and line it throughout with quilted satin, folding it so that it forms two pockets for the ties. When finished and closed like a book, it should measure about half a yard long by five and a-half inches wide. A little sachet-powder in a sheet of wadding should be placed between the cover and the lining, and it is an improvement if one corner is turned back and fastened down so that the contrasting color of the lining is seen.

Upon this corner sometimes a monogram or initials are embroidered, or frequently the sole ornamentation on the outside is a large monogram, formed by very much elongated letters gracefully entwined.

Of course there are endless ways in which the exterior of these necktie-cases can be decorated, almost any kind of embroidery being suitable. Hand-painted satin, too, is often much appreciated, or, when time is an object, I have seen the sprays of flowers, birds, butterflies, etc., which can be bought ready worked, applied to plush with excellent results.

These remarks as to decoration are equally suitable to the other style of necktie-cases, which are usually the same size and shape, only instead of being soft they

are made upon firm pieces of card-board, covered with satin, the inner pieces being crossed by bands of silk elastic, under which the neckties are to be placed. The cards are then neatly sewn together, and if the stitches show, a very small cord would be sufficient to cover all the imperfections. There can be no doubt that this kind of case is a far greater protection to the neckties than the soft ones, and would prevent them from being tumbled when traveling in a not-too-carefully packed portmanteau.

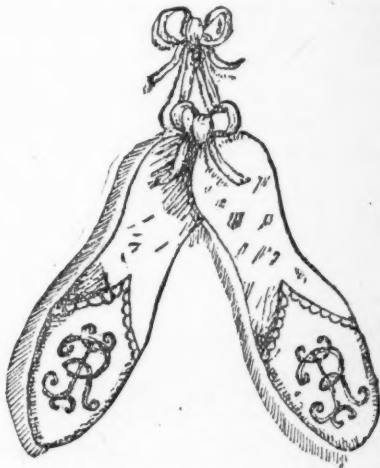
I have also seen a much smaller case in a similar style, which was especially arranged for the made-up ties so much used now by those who find the tying of a neat bow not so easy as it looks.



TOBACCO POUCH.

Of course, for men who smoke, tobacco-pouches are in constant request, and some of the newest designs are great improvements on the older ones. The latest idea, I think, is to have the gutta-percha pouches covered in cloth, or any other suitable material, which is then worked in colored silks, having on one side a floral design and on the other the Christian name of the owner, the letters of which are embroidered in different shades, the initial letter being of the darkest, and the others gradually worked downward in tone to the last letter, for which a very pale shade

is used. In fact, almost everything now which is intended for a present has either a monogram, initial, or a name embroidered—an excellent custom, for, besides being an additional ornament, it is a distinct proof that the article has been prepared especially for the person who received it, and that some care and thought has been given to its selection.



WHISK HOLDER.

Even dressing-room slippers are now made with long, narrow monograms, which are sometimes worked in beads, extending over the entire length of the toe-piece, each letter being in a different kind of bead. I saw a pair this week which had been designed to order, having the three letters of a large monogram worked in steel, smocked, and gold beads.

A very comfortable and useful present for any one who travels or drives much is a railway or carriage-rug. This should be made of a good, thick material, and ornamented at one corner with a large monogram. Cut out in cloth of a color contrasting well with the rug, and attach to it with any fancy stitches worked in silks.

For a railway rug, double-faced cloth would be an excellent material, for it is thick and warm, and made in several artistic shades. A dark-blue would be serviceable, and could have a large monogram applied to it in either yellow or crimson cloth, which might either be en-

tirely covered with fancy stitches in silk, giving it the appearance of a silk monogram, or it could be simply outlined in silk or wool.

Nowadays young men who have rooms of their own sometimes take a great interest in their decoration; and when this is the case there is never very much difficulty in choosing something useful or ornamental which would be acceptable. Girls who can paint are frequently kept well employed by their brothers, who think that sisters have nothing else to do but supply their demands, and who incessantly require "just" a pretty plate, plaque, or bracket to hang on their walls,



NEWSPAPER HOLDER.

or a photograph frame to hold some favorite picture.

A lamp shade would be a pretty and simple present to make, especially now that the wide white lace can be bought ready drawn up on a thread, which does away with a good deal of the worrying part of the making. Wire frames for lamp shades of all sorts and sizes can be procured, which when covered with their red silk and lace trimmings, and placed on a pretty lamp, give the finishing touch to a cozy room.

A pretty idea for a dressing-room or hall which I have heard of lately was

made as follows: Four pieces of cardboard were cut out, two to represent the soles, and two the toe-pieces of a heelless slipper; they were then covered with dark crimson velvet, and upon each toe-piece was embroidered in gold thread the monogram of the owner. These when sewn on to the pieces which represented the soles formed a pair of miniature slippers, which were attached at the heels of a bow of crimson ribbon, and when hung on the wall were used as a receptacle for two ivory brushes for hat and clothes, upon which the same monogram was of course engraved.

Cushions, screens, and cozies, too, are sometimes welcome gifts, especially if adorned with the crest of the regiment or college to which the owner of the room belongs; and, indeed, a little thought in selecting the colors of the regiment, or some club, makes any trifle in needlework additionally charming.

Although sailors often have their cabins very prettily got up, there is certainly more difficulty in knowing exactly what to choose for a present for them, as such trifles as the rolling of the ship, and the possible drenching by salt water of the whole cabin, have to be taken into account.

Things which could be firmly attached to the walls would doubtless be most acceptable; and as economy of space is desirable on board ship, I think that the little brush pockets which I have described above would be very useful, only probably they would be more serviceable if covered in cloth. Navy-blue, with a gold-colored silk monogram embroidered on one slipper, and then his crest or name on the other, would be both appropriate and pretty.

Numerous little novelties are being brought out in the popular perforated cloth work, and among them the following may be considered suitable: Tidies for dressing-rooms made of colored cloth, arranged with several different sized pockets, marked "slippers," "razors," etc. They are traced and perforated with a design for working, and would certainly be useful in a small room or cabin, as they have "a place for everything, and everything in its place" sort of appearance, which would delight a tidy man. They are made in several different styles

and shapes, some being arranged for brushes of every description, and others having places for shaving requisites also attached to them. Shaving tidies can be had separately, with or without pockets for razors. Smoking-room tidies in perforated cloth can also be procured in the same style, the shapes varying, some being simply arranged for pipes while others have also a pouch for tobacco, lined with gutta-percha, and a little pocket for matches.

Cases of the same work to hang on a wall, and having a long white-wood paper-knife, which could be fitted, are novel and inexpensive.

Some new wall-pockets for newspapers, which are now made in many different designs, are usually upon a foundation of felt or cloth, and worked in various styles. The most simple have a device traced and perforated, and only require to be worked with silks and tinsel cords. One I saw, in

terra-cotta-colored cloth, had the words "Newspapers" cut out in clearly-defined letters in the cloth, which were "appliquéd" on the plush, while the pattern traced was a spray of large marguerites and leaves, under which was inserted a circle of the same dark shade of plush. Another, in bluish-gray felt, was also shaped like a small banner, and had, besides the place for the newspapers at the back, a small pocket that would be useful for any little odds and ends. A third had a strap of cloth, into which a long paper-knife was inserted; in fact, the varieties of patterns and styles in which these little novelties are made are the best proof of their popularity. The newspaper tidies are all mounted upon gilt sticks, and provided with cords to suspend them matching the cloth or felt, and are, in fact, complete, requiring no mounting after the working.

HOME DRESSMAKING.

WINTER FASHIONS.

FASHIONS of out-door apparel tends rather to severity than to elaboration, and the bodices and coats are hidden under mantles, which give the appearance of a draped skirt.

Green is undoubtedly the most favored color, but terra-cotta is largely worn, more perhaps for calling and visiting gowns than for ordinary walking suits.

A very dark tint of terra-cotta is much used for teas; indeed, this and green, with now and then deep gendarme blue, comprise the only shades used for out-door wraps.

Jackets, instead of having the edges machine-stitched in tailor fashion, are now finished with braid of the same color; this used in various ways, the narrow braid laid on in double or treble rows, being effected.

Short coats are bound with fine mohair or silk braid, while they have an outline

of broad military braid finished by lines of the narrower braid.

Open-fronted jackets are still in favor, but to suit colder weather they are fitted with close-fitting vests. At the top of page 296 will be found a coat of this type, and one which is exceedingly fashionable.

The vest joins in at the under-arm seam, and both are attached to the vest at the centre seam, the left side reaching only to the centre, and the right side fastening across to the left shoulder.

This shape admits of elaborate or simple braiding, and many have the whole of the fronts, as well as a deep triangle at the back, covered with a closely braided design.

The second model gives a charming little winter wrap for girls of six to eight or twelve to thirteen years. The under-part is fitted with coat sleeves, and the front has a box-plait which forms the centre of the cloak.



This wrap is of golden-brown cloth, with lines of tiny Russian braid on cuffs, collar, and over-cape. The cape extends to the side of the back only, and not

across it; but the back forms two box-plaits, which commence just below the waist.

The graceful polonaise shown on the

third figure is of soft foulé cloth, which drapes beautifully, and is yet firm enough to admit of elaborate braiding designs.

The left side of the bodice forms a short-pointed basque which fastens down the centre; but the right side fastens across to the left, and the drapery is here collected beneath the end of the velvet rever.

The right side of the apron is rounded off, so that, although the arrangement is different to that of the left side, yet the same amount of the velvet skirt is visible.



FIG. 1.

On the left side the edge of the front drapery hangs apparently loose; but two safety-hooks connect it with the folds of the back. The back is cut separately, and consists of plain widths set in organ plaits across the back and rounded side-pieces of the bodice.

In fitting the polonaise, fasten the centre, and get your right side carefully arranged before troubling about the left.

If it is placed on a good dress-stand, the draperies will not be troublesome, but carefully pin the centre in a straight line, and draw the side folds from this. The front and bosom seams run off to nothing,

and, if well pressed, the ends fall in the skirt plaits, and are not observed.

Fig. 1 is a frock of ruby cashmere, with full sleeves and cuffs, collar, and a band all round the edge of the garment of ruby velvet. The front is cream surah smocked at neck and waist, and with two or three small tucks round the bottom.

Fig. 2 is a child's coat or pelisse, and is



FIG. 2.

meant to be gray plush, trimmed with gray fur round neck, cuffs, and front, and gray silk ornaments and cords across.

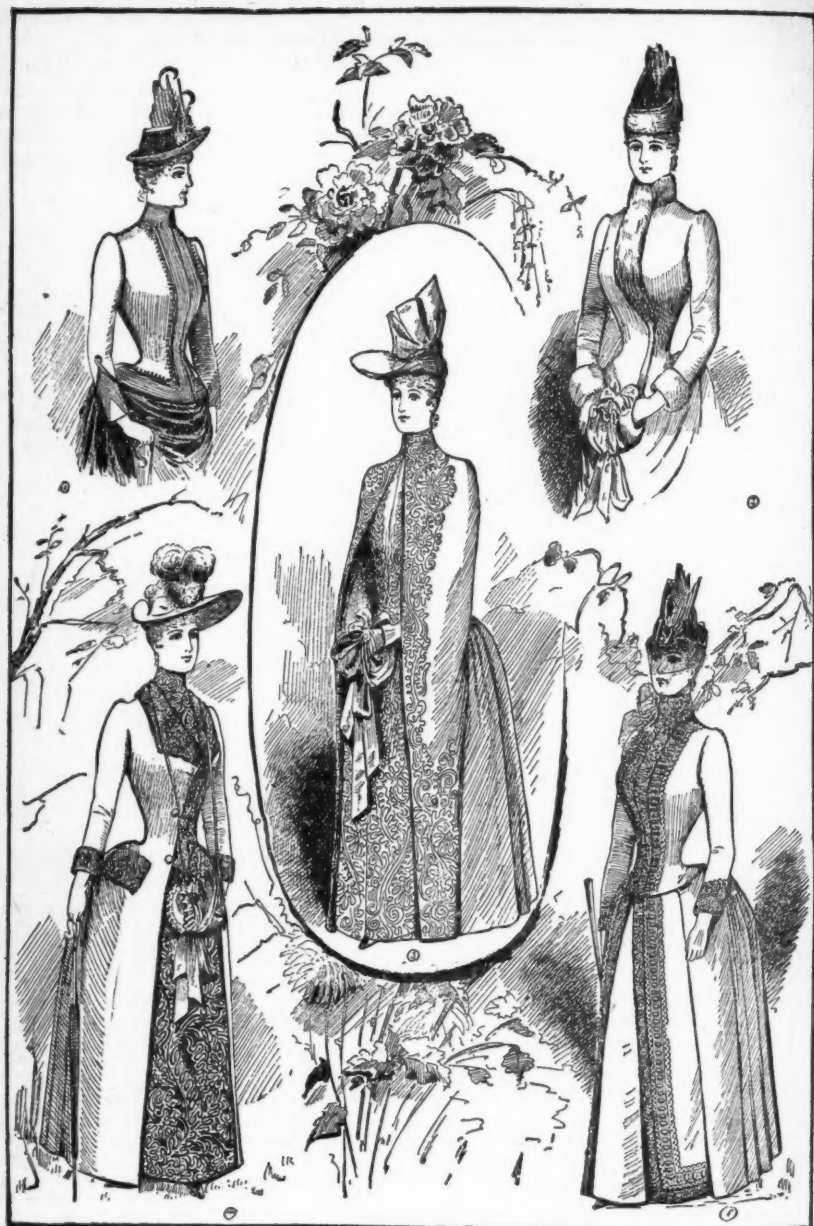
On page 298, we have, first, a closely-fitting jacket of dark-blue cloth, trimmed with black military braid, simulating double fronts, pointed cuffs, and upright collar.

No. 2. Jacket in fawn cloth, with golden beaver rolled collar and cuffs. The fur forms a revers in front. A pretty muff to match, composed of cloth, beaver, and ribbon. Velvet toque, with straight beaver brim.

No. 3. Carriage cloak in fawn Venetian cloth, with richly braided front. The long hanging sleeves are lined with silk.

No. 4. Walking dress in chaudron tweed. The front of the skirt and the waistcoat are braided; square revers of Astrakan on the bodice; also Astrakan cuffs and pocket.

No. 5. Costume in olive-green Botany



cloth, trimmed with Astrakan, and green bodice and the robings of the cuffs correspond. and tinsel passementerie on the jacket



CHILDREN'S PARTY FROCKS.

It is so easy to dress children prettily, but the style must be simplicity itself, and the material soft and dainty.

White is always charming, if relieved by pale-colored ribbons; but children must either be very dark or exceedingly fair to look well in white alone.

There are innumerable materials which get up well and serve for summer wear, and it is wise to spend a few extra dollars on such fabrics, and to buy good ribbons for sashes and trimmings, as these will be wearable later on.

India muslin makes up beautifully with insertions and edgings of torchon lace, and full-gathered skirts of this muslin, with two rows of insertion and an edging of lace, form the daintiest little frocks that it is possible to suggest; and yet these may be constantly washed and varied by different sashes for summer wear.

Cream washing silks are always pleasing; but all ordinary silks and satins should be avoided unless used merely as trimmings to softer materials.

On page 299 we give suggestions for children's costumes which can be copied in various materials and different colorings. The first frock is of India muslin, with insertion and edging of torchon lace, and the sash is of old-gold silk. White silk stockings, and shoes of buff-colored leather, with white silk gloves, complete this costume.

This same model might be copied in pale pink crêpe, with the skirt hemmed and tucked, and neck and sleeves trimmed with cream lace. The shoes could be bronze leather, the stockings and gloves cream-colored, and the sash a very deep crimson, or a pretty bright bronze-brown.

For a very fair child, the frock might be sea-green, with a sash of deep lizard-green, the shoes, gloves, hose, and lace trimming all of pure white.

The second model is in "Directoire" form, and is equally suitable for tall girls of eleven to thirteen, or for girls of eight to nine years old.

This velvet coat has narrow side panels, but the back is cut straight across the

waist, and the sash falls from the waist, in long bows and ends.

The under-dress is of lace made on a Princess foundation of colored sateen, and here the coloring may be used in many ways, or the costume may be carried out in several shades of one color.

The coat is of moss-green Vel-Vel, faced with shrimp-pink, this also forming the revers. The foundation is of sateen, covered with cream lace, and sash, gloves, and shoes are also pink, the stockings matching the dress.

The third costume is also made on a Princess foundation of sateen—this in pale blue. The little coat of white silk is made on the Princess lining, and terminates at the waist, which is cut rather long. The sash is at the edge of the coat, and the fronts are trimmed with silver braid. This frock fastens in front beneath the folds, and the whole toilette is entirely of white and blue.

Fourth figure gives a pretty little suit for boys of six to eight years, with vandyked collar in Irish or guipure lace.

The coat of the No. 4 suit is made quite separate from the suit, and has a back of thin lining. The coat and vest are of golden-brown plush, and the vest is of the palest shrimp-pink surah.

The fifth model is for a girl of ten to twelve years, and is made of lace-striped muslin made up over pale-pink silk.

The sash is a very broad one of soft silk, with fringed ends, this is cut and folded, the cut ends being sewn down or tacked over the under-arm seam.

The bodice is a simple full one made on a shaped lining, and the skirt consists of plain widths, the front longer than the foundation, and draped in the side seams; the side and back widths, of same length as skirt, are gathered at the top.

EVENINGS WITH THE POETS.

WINDS OF MARCH.

WINDS of March, thro' leafless
branches wailing,
O'er fields of snow or meadows brown
and drear!
Clouds of March thro' the deep heavens
sailing,
When will the winter cease and spring
be here?

Oh! newly wakened waters, slowly throbbing
With musical, deep pulses, soft and
clear!
Oh! lonesome woodlands, now forever sobbing,
When will the winter cease and spring
be here?

So long to wait—so long, the heart grows
weary!
Thro' chilling silence strains the wistful
ear;
No answer comes—the heavens are gray
and dreary;
When will the winter cease and spring
be here?

GRACE ADELE PIERCE.

FOR HIM WHOSE SOUL HATH WINTER.

[Paraphrased from the German.]

FOR him whose soul hath Winter,
Spring spends her blooms in vain;
For him whose ear is heavy,
Sweet Echo wakes no strain;
Whose heart no song doth whisper;
Shall never know Song's power;
Who hath not Love's sweet quick'ning
Is alien to Love's dower.

What counts a life's endeavor,
Though spurred by finest thought,
That, feeding selfish purpose,
Leaves souls of men unsought?
Availe one kindly impulse,
That blossoms to no deed?
What virtue hath the message
That touches no man's need?

The living, loving spirit
Will find its spirit-kin;
When heart-doors swing at Love's light
touch,
Love surely enters in;
Who bars his soul to others,
Shall know the exile's doom;
For him whose soul hath Winter,
In vain Spring spends her bloom.

HELEN WATTERSON, in *Youth's Companion*.

SCOTCH SONG.

MY LADDIE.

OH, my laddie, my laddie,
I lo'e your very plaidie,
I lo'e your very bonnet
Wi' the silver buckle on it,
I lo'e your collie Harry,
I lo'e the kent ye carry;
But oh! it's past my power to tell
How much, how much I lo'e yoursel!

Oh, my dearie, my dearie,
I could luik an' never weary
At your een sae blue an' laughin',
That a heart o' stane wad saften,
While your mouth sae proud an' curly
Gars my heart gang tirlie-wirlie;
But on! yoursel, your very sel,
I lo'e ten thousand times as well!

Oh, my darlin', my darlin',
 Let's gang amang the carlin,
 Let's loll upo' the heather
 A' this bonny, bonny weather;
 Ye shall fauld me in your plaidie,
 My luve, my luve, my laddie;
 An' close, an' close into your ear
 I'll tell ye how I lo'e ye, dear.

AMÉLIE RIVES, in *Harper's Magazine*

DOWN INTO THE DUST.

IS it worth while that we jostle a brother
 Bearing his load on the rough road
 of life?

Is it worth while that we jeer at each
 other

In the blackness of heart? that we war
 to the knife?

God pity us all in our pitiful strife.

God pity us all as we jostle each other;
 God pardon us all for the triumph we
 feel

When a fellow goes down 'neath his load
 on that heather

Pierced to the heart; words are keener
 than steel.

And mightier far for woe or for weal.

Were it not well, in this brief little jour-
 ney

On over the isthmus, down into the
 tide,

We give him a fish instead of a serpent,
 Ere folding the hands to be and abide
 Forever and aye in the dust by his side.

Look at the roses saluting each other,
 Look at the herds all at peace on the
 plain—

Man and man only makes war on his
 brother,

And laughs in his heart at his peril and
 pain;

Shamed by the beasts that go down
 on the plain.

Is it worth while that we battle to hum-
 ble

Some poor fellow-soldier down into the
 dust?

God pity us all! Time eft soon will
 tumble

All of us together like leaves in a gust,
 Humbled indeed down into the dust.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

PUBLISHERS.

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BLOSSOMS.

